RELEASED PER P.L-102-526(JFK ACT)
NARA JA DATE 6/17/05

Part II

Castro Must Go

A. Organizing for Covert Action (January-March 1960)

The first mention of a formal Agency structure to deal with the matter of Fidel Castro was noted by Colonel L. K. White, then Deputy Director for Support, in reporting on the DCI's morning meeting of 8 January 1960. White's diary noted:

> There was considerable discussion of the situation in Cuba, and the Director requested Dick Bissell to organize a special task force to insure that we were attacking this situation from all possible angles. 1/

The instruction was taken to heart, for on 18 January 1960 the WH Division organized Branch 4 (WH/4) as an expandable task force to run the proposed Cuban Operations. The initial Table of Organization totaled 40 persons, with 18 at Headquarters, 20 at Havana Station, and 2 at Santiago Base. 2/

Named to head the new Branch in Western Hemisphere Division, was Jacob D. Esterline, recently returned [27] [16-17], and formerly one of the principals

This frame of reference concerning Guantanamo Bay led the Executive Officer of WH/4, Ed Stanulis, to prepare an extremely sharp memorandum for Chief, Western Hemisphere Division raising some questions which are as pertinent to CIA today as they were when they were raised in 1960. Stanulis wrote as follows:

> I realize that this Agency is an implementing arm of the Executive Branch and has no right or privilege in the area of formulation of U.S. national policy. I believe that within this framework we who are part of this Agency are permitted to comment on certain State Department or other Executive Department propositions that appear, on the basis of our own personal observations and experience, to be counter-productive to the best interest of the United States. I am convinced that the course of action, described in paragraph 1 [that the U.S. use the IADB to win Latin American support for the U.S. retention of Guantanamo] is in fact within this category.
>
> It is high time that the U.S. take an understandable public position in matters of international agreement, compact, contract, and treaty. The rights of the U.S. to the Guantanamo Bay area have been clearly and legally described in several documents which bear the signatures of the then reigning and cognizant governments of the United States and Cuba, respectively. Certainly the assistance of any single or plural Latin American national entity (ies) seems to me to be indicative of an admitted weakness on the part of the United States

RELEASED PER P.L. 102-526 (JFK ACT)
NARA JR DATE 6/17/95

and its conviction of its legal international rights.

I suggest that this Agency make known to the State Department its feelings in this matter, as described above (if addressees agree). I realize that considerable discussion could be waged in terms of legally and/or logically presenting our case. This memorandum is not intended to meet these requirements.

One observation that might be included is the fact that the current Chief of Naval Operations, Admiral Arleigh Burke, has on at least two occasions in U.S. mass media of sizable circulation stated that the United States would not tolerate any invasion of Guantanamo or hostile abrogation of our treaty arrangements to the base. I believe it is significant to note that no responsible member of the Executive Branch (including the President of the United States) has contradicted his statements. On the basis of this evidence, it would appear to me that the official overt position of the United States is crystal clear and we need not at this time place ourselves in a position of indebtedness or vulnerability with any other Latin American nation in terms of the Guantanamo issue. 109/

RELEASED PER P.L.-102-526(JFK ACT)
NARA JA DATE 4/17/95

By early November 1960 Secretary of State, Christian Herter, had decided that the matter of Guantanamo needed to be discussed at a higher level; and, consequently, he introduced the subject on the agenda for the National Security Council meeting of 7 November 1960. The Secretary emphasized the need for coordination of military and political planning

in case of an attack on the naval base. Herter indicated two extreme possibilities: one, that in case of an attack, the United States respond with only sufficient military force to protect the base itself; and another, that the United States decide that an attack on the base was in fact an act of war and apply such military power as necessary. Herter also suggested, of course, that there would be possible responses between the two extremes, with activities in the OAS or the UN possibly having some bearing on the US response -- the sort of contention that undoubtedly must have raised the hackles on Mr. Stanulis again. The Secretary of State did specify, however, that the US response to an attack on Guantanamo would be the result of a decision made by the President of the United States.

As will be pointed out subsequently, the Cubans would make charges about Guantanamo being the center for anti-Castro activities, and there would be a few instances where anti-Castro Cubans were able to find refuge within the confines of the base. Overall, however, there was a surprising degree of neutrality with respect to the naval installation during the course of the Bay of Pigs operation.

RELEASED PER P.L.-102-526(JFK ACT)
NARA JR DATE 4/7/05

It is also important to mention at this time the Agency's relations with the Commander in Chief, CINCLANT, Admiral Dennison. Before the end of October 1960, the Admiral had made it clear to the Agency's representatives that he believed it impossible for him to conduct the affairs of the Atlantic Fleet in the Cuban area properly until he received further information -- specific information -- about the Agency's planned operations against Castro. When this report on Dennison was brought to the attention of the Chief of the Agency War Plans Staff, F. P. Holcomb, Holcomb assured the Admiral that any request for information which he cared to lay on the Agency would be promptly answered. By this time, Dennison indicated that he had already been in touch with General Lemnitzer, Chairman of the JCS, and the expectation was that such briefing on Cuban affairs by CIA was being laid on.

Holcomb, quite truthfully, indicated that neither he nor the Agency's liaison officer to CINCLANT, Commander Ray E. Millard, were privy to the planned operations of WH/4. Once having assured the Admiral of the willingness of CIA to cooperate and provide

RELEASED PER P.L-102-526(JFK ACT)
NARA JA DATE 4/17/95

him with the necessary information, Holcomb then noted:

> It was the impression of the CIA officers present that Admiral Dennison is a cooperative officer and favorably and objectively inclined towards CIA, and that if his needs can be met, he will undoubtedly follow a positive and helpful course. 111/

On 2 November 1960, Richard Bissell, Jacob Esterline, and Colonel Jack Hawkins traveled to Norfolk to Admiral Dennison's headquarters. The CIA representatives received a general briefing by the Navy on contingency plans for Hispaniola and Cuba, and in return, they briefed the Navy on Project JMATE. Mr. Bissell gave an overview of the CIA operation, Esterline discussed the political and propaganda aspects, and Hawkins talked about the PM program, including the plan for a 1,500-man invasion force to seize a lodgement on the island of Cuba. Hawkins emphasized that this last objective could not be met until March or April of 1961.* 112/

RELEASED PER P.L-102-526(JFK ACT)
NARA JA DATE 4/17/95

---

* In a telecon with the author of this history on 15 May 1978, Admiral Dennison indicated that it was extremely late in the course of the Bay of Pigs operation before he received any briefing from CIA on the anti-Castro operation. He made it sound, in fact, as though he was not briefed until shortly before the

(footnote continued on following page)

D. Personnel and Training

From the time of the official approval of the anti-Castro policy by President Eisenhower until the collapse of the effort at the Bay of Pigs the question of personnel and personnel management for Project JMATE was of constant concern. Even though the Director of Central Intelligence "emphasized the significance of the Project, by saying that he would recall Agency personnel from any station in the world if the individual's abilities were required for the successful achievement of JMATE objectives," some of those who were closest to the personnel problem believed that DCI Dulles failed completely to keep that promise. 113/ Jake Esterline, Chief, WH/4 has remarked as follows:

> It was obvious that as the operation began to increase in size that the Divisions didn't have the personnel, the senior personnel, to staff out the organization; or if they did have them, they weren't about to release them from the

RELEASED PER P.L.102-526(JFK ACT)
NARA JR DATE 4/17/95

LSD (Landing Ship Dock) which was to carry the landing craft to the area of the Bahia de Cochinos was ready to load at the naval base at Vieques for the invasion. As the text above confirms, however, the Admiral was read into the act relatively early in the game and should have had plenty of time to make preparations for the activities of April 1961.

RELEASED PER P.L-102-526(JFK ACT)
NARA JA DATE 4/7/95

things they were doing, because they were considered indispensable, which was probably correct. It was on that basis, I think, that when people like Dick Drain came back home from -- in Dick's case, I think he came in from C 113 -- where he had a pretty good record -- but he was not returning to Headquarters to go into an assignment, and Dick Bissell put him in the operation with us. Gerry Droller had been around Headquarters for a long time, had been quite a bit of a replacement problem. He was very bright, he was a German specialist, had a pretty good political background; and Gerry and Howard Hunt, for whatever reason, were sort of selected, not by us, but they were told they were going to be the people who would handle the political aspects of the operation. 114/

Esterline also noted that the shortage of competent personnel became particularly critical when the operational concepts began to change and to expand. He claimed that when serious problems came up none of the GS-18 case officers were available to make decisions. 115/

Bill Eisemann, Chief/Support/WH/4, was more specific in his criticism of the personnel management for Project JMATE. After emphasizing that Colonel L. K. White, the Deputy Director for Support (DDS), did insure that the support elements got the best people for Project JMATE, "he [White], directed all Support office heads that if there was a need for any

senior officer or any position to be filled that they would fill it without any hesitation whatsoever." 116/

But, in contrast, Eisemann pointed out:

> I can't say that was true on the operational side of the shop. A Contingency Task Force, a program developed by the Clandestine Services, was designed to make available Agency personnel who could be pulled out of any position that they were assigned to and moved into any urgent, high priority type of project. JMATE Project, was a high priority project; and the Contingency Task Force concept, in my opinion, failed at that point because the Clandestine Services did not provide the top quality people we needed for the position to be filled. After JMATE Project ... the Contingency Task Force was completely abolished. Many people in the Agency were designated from the Support and the Operational side to fill various positions as they would come up, but it didn't work from the Clandestine Services side. We had real problems, trying to get qualified ... top qualified people ... to do those jobs. In my opinion, the Contingency Task Force was a failure. It was set up and designed so that qualified personnel would be completely immunized and processed and ready to go with passports at any given time. But you couldn't get the people you wanted -- I'm talking about qualified key professionals in the Clandestine Services -- because the Division heads in the Clandestine Services would not release those people. 117/

RELEASED PER P.L. 102-526(JFK ACT)
NARA JA DATE 6/17/95

Dick Drain, who became Chief of Operations for Project JMATE was among the severest of the critics with reference to the personnel assigned to Project JMATE. Pointing to his own case, Drain stated:

~~TOP SECRET~~

> I don't mean to be unduly immodest, but really, I didn't have any qualifications for this [WH/4] except that I was there and unemployed -- had no Spanish language whatsoever, and my entire exposure had been punching cows in Arizona in 1940. That doesn't really bring you up much on Latin America and latinos, and any of that ... I had never been on an amphibious operation, and if that was characteristic of my qualifications, it really characterized the whole damned operation ... about which, it seemed to me, there was a good deal of well-meaning hypocrisy. Allen Dulles, always meaning what he said, would say repeatedly, "now, I want the very best people assigned to this project ... there is nothing more important that we are doing than this; and I want directed assignments ... I want people pulled out of tours overseas if necessary, this thing must be manned." Everybody would solemnly nod and, then, much like the case of Vietnam ... humans being humans ... we would tend to get the people that the area Division Chiefs found "excess" -- which normally meant "found insufficient." With many notable exceptions, we did not get the very best people available. 118/

RELEASED PER P.L-102-526(JFK ACT)
NARA JA DATE 4/17/95

Although Drain levelled his broadside at all of the Divisions in the DDP, he was most critical of the Western Hemisphere Division:

> More of this staffing would have come from WH if there had been more competent people within WH. WH suffered, in my opinion, from a surfeit of ex-FBI officers who had been picked up at the time that the Agency took over from the Bureau in Latin America ... but there were damned few of them that had any particular experience ... One of the main things that plagued me was that I could never

TOP SECRET

figure out, because nobody ever made it clear, where the hell the project stood vis-a-vis WH ... J. C. King never was told, I think for understandable reasons, to what extent he was in it, and to what extent he was not in it. 119/

As with other of the principals who were involved in the WH/4 effort, Drain was extremely complimentary of the Support element assigned to WH/4, stating as follows:

This is a little ironic, because with Bissell as the DDP, you would have thought that if the directed assignment thing worked anywhere, it should have worked within the DDP. It worked less well there than it did within the DDS. Red White, soldierly like he was, took absolutely sincerely, what the Director said, when he said "I want the very best people assigned to this." So we got Mike King to run the finance, not some stumblebum with garters on his sleeve ... the best finance officer they had. Our logistics support and Bill Eisemann, they were really hand picked by Red White ... The DDS or the DDA, whatever they called it then, deserved very high marks for being uniquely the people to put their back into it. The DDI really wasn't asked; and that was too bad, because we could have used, it seems to me, some input from the DDI. Our own intelligence report structure was not bad. The Chief, FI was a nice old guy, [3]; and we had some reports officers who were quite competent in the DDP sense; but the thing was so compartmented from the DDI, in any event, that the idea of drawing down on DDI talent to get in on this, was not well received. I had suggested it because I had been

RELEASED PER P.L-102-526(JFK ACT)
NARA JA DATE 6/17/95

> in the DDI and I knew where the talent was. For example, on just such a mundane, but important thing, as topography and geography and beach stuff ... Christ, I well knew from the time that I worked for Lofty Becker ... that there was in old ORR ... in the geographic thing ... Jim [Brammell], ... Otto Guthe ... I mean, they would have been glad to supply people ... and we didn't ask. So you can't say that DDI didn't provide, unless you understand that they didn't provide because they really weren't asked.* 120/

Although the Agency's own personnel assignments have been criticized, the assignment of two of the key military personnel involved in the JMARC operation proved to be quite successful. Col. Jack Hawkins, United States Marine Corps, and Lt. Col. Frank Egan, United States Army, were in charge of the overall PM activity (Hawkins) and the PM training (Egan) for the Cuban exile brigade. Hawkins, who was serving on the Staff of the Marine School at Quantico, Virginia at

---

* Drain's suggestion that the DDI was left completely in the cold during the Bay of Pigs operation overstates the case. As early as January 1959 there is evidence that Mr. Helms agreed to cut the DDI in on "useful intelligence to which it would be well for the DD/I to have access" from State cable traffic on Cuba being carried over CIA channels. A "massive" study of Cuban telecommunications facilities prepared by ORR in the fall of 1960 led Mr. Bissell to send a memo of commendation for the Communications Branch through the DDI. Obviously the DDI knew something was afoot. 120a/

RELEASED PER P.L. 102-526 (JFK ACT)
NARA JA DATE 6/11/95

~~TOP SECRET~~

the time that he was assigned to Project JMARC, had taken part in the battles of Bataan and Corregidor; had been taken prisoner with the fall of Corregidor; and escaped from the Japanese prisoner of war camp at Davao, Mindanao; and joined the Philippine guerrilla forces, leading raiding parties and harassing attacks against the Japanese army in the Philippines. After seven months of such activity, he was evacuated by submarine from the Philippines in November 1943 and was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross for these actions. After returning to the United States for additional training, in November 1944 Hawkins again returned to the Pacific area where he was an assistant operations officer taking part in the assault and capture of Okinawa. For this service, he received a Bronze Star Medal. During the Korean conflict, he was Commanding Officer of the 1st Battalion, 1st Marines; and he led the Battalion in combat during the Inchon landing and in subsequent operations in Korea. For his participation in the Inchon-Seoul operation, Hawkins had received the Silver Star Medal for heroism. From March 1956 to the summer of 1959 when he entered the Naval War College, Hawkins had

RELEASED PER P.L.-102-526(JFK ACT)
NARA JA DATE 6/17/05

TOP SECRET

served as liaison officer with the Amphibious Forces Atlantic in Norfolk, Virginia -- a pertinent assignment for his transfer to Project JMARC.

Lt. Col. Egan's military record showed a well-trained infantry officer who had served overseas in the European Theater during the course of World War II; an infantry officer including an infantry training officer in much of the period following World War II; and a staff officer in the Special Warfare Division of the United States Army in 1958, serving with the Director of Plans, in Washington from 1958 to 1960. Immediately prior to his assignment to Project JMATE, Colonel Egan had been on the Operations and Training Staff of a Joint Support Group, headquartered in Washington. Egan EOD'd with Project JMATE, 27 June 1960, and Hawkins on 29 August of 1960. 121/ Both officers received high marks from Mr. Bissell and Jake Esterline, and particularly from Dick Drain, who stated:

> I thought they [Hawkins and Egan] were first rate ... I mean first rate, not compared with the jaded World War II memory, but first rate in terms of officers then serving in the armed forces of the United States. The Hawkins selection was an excellent one. I don't myself, know how

RELEASED PER P.L-102-526(JFK ACT)
NARA JA DATE 6/17/95

one could have found a better man. People have said ... "Well, the son of a bitch just worked out in the Philippines as a stay behind ... what did he know?" He knew a lot. He had written a book on guerrillas. He was sharp, he was smart, and honest, and not overly ambitious. I am sure that he saw this as a way to further his career, of course. Military men, I think, tend to maximize that more than Agency people. But that was not his motivation -- or his primary motivation. He had around him some really first rate help ... not very high ranking ... but we didn't need an awful lot of high ranking ... we needed some hard workers. Frank Egan, who went down to do the training, was the man that I would have picked. He was probably the most disputable of the bunch because he was pretty volatile. He has been condemned for leading the Cuban manpower to believe that they were going to get more support than he had any right to let them know about. Well, I wasn't there, but I know damned well that if I had been, I would have been priming up the Brigade to do this tough job, not by counseling them as to the difficulty of it ... at least, exclusively ... or, giving them lectures about now you will really have to do this on your own, because you are not going to get one iota of assistance from the armed forces. You don't normally train a group to conduct an operation of this sort by playing on their fears. If, down there at the end of the line -- first in Guatemala and then in Nicaragua -- Egan led them to believe that they were going to get them more help than he had any right to let them know, well, I can understand why that would have happened.* 122/

RELEASED PER P.L.-102-526(JFK ACT)
NARA JA DATE 4/17/95

---

* With reference to Colonel Hawkins, Jake Esterline has noted:

(footnote continued on following page)

By way of illustrating some of the problems encountered in acquiring adequate personnel for the JMATE operation, on the very day that President Eisenhower was approving the anti-Castro program, a memorandum was being sent to the Deputy Director for Plans from the Chief, Western Hemisphere Division noting that two individuals assigned to the Office of Training were urgently needed for service in WH/4. Colonel King reported to the DDP that although Colonel Matt Baird, Director of Training, was agreeable to the release of the two individuals to serve as PM trainers, Baird insisted that the men could not be

RELEASED PER P.L. 102-526(JFK ACT)
NARA JR DATE 4/17/95

> I guess that it is only fair to say that that assignment [Project JMARC] cost him his general's star, and a good many other things in terms of his record. 123/

The author of this history attempted to arrange oral history interviews with Colonels Hawkins and Egan, but in neither case would the individuals consent to such interview. In addition, the author also asked each man if he would be willing to respond to a series of written questions, and neither would agree to this. It was made quite clear to the author that both individuals harbored considerable resentment about their relationships and association with the Agency at the time of the Bay of Pigs. In a similar manner, Col. John F. Mallard, United States Marine Corps who was Liaison Officer between the Agency and the Department of Defense, at the time of the Bay of Pigs, also rejected the author's request for either an oral interview or a response to written questions.

TOP SECRET

released until suitable replacements could be found to take over their tasks in the Office of Training. King, therefore, appealed to the Deputy Director for Plans for their immediate release. 124/

Not only did the Clandestine Service encounter difficulty in obtaining personnel from within its own units to serve in WH/4, it also appeared to draw blanks in terms of Cubans willing to volunteer for the struggle against Castro. In response to a November 1959 memorandum to all WH field stations and bases asking that they supply the names of Cubans who would be willing to work as agents against the Castro Government, WH/4/FI reported the results of its search, stating that as of June 1960:

> Many of the Agents who were proposed by other WH Stations for use in Cuba were either found unacceptable, or did not want to accept such an assignment. Other stations were unable to come up with any assets who might gain access to the desired targets in Cuba. 125/

The problem which Col. Baird had raised back in March concerning replacement for personnel who might be assigned to Project WH/4 was not actually resolved until June of 1960 when:

> Colonel White announced that DDS personnel on full time detail to JMARC

RELEASED PER P.L. 102-526(JFK ACT)
NARA JA
DATE 6/17/05

would be transferred to the project Table of Organization, effective the beginning of the first pay period in July 1960. Employees on detail to the project from the Clandestine Services offices will not be transferred since DDP considers them temporary assignments with the personnel returning to their parent office when the project is completed. Colonel White pointed out, that although DDS personnel would be transferred to the project, thereby relieving slots in the various DDS elements, each office head should keep in mind that his employees will be returning to him, and he should plan accordingly. 126/

RELEASED PER P.L-102-526(JFK ACT)
NARA JA DATE 4/7/05

Colonel White's comments are quite understandable in view of the fact that of 104 personnel on duty with JMATE on 7-8 June 1960, only 32 were Clandestine Services careerists; and excepting a few with DDI career designations, the bulk of the personnel were Support careerists. By 14 June 1960, Colonel King was appealing to the DDP for an increment which would bring total JMATE personnel to 234, including 131 employees who were to be in the field. Apparently, however, the Deputy Director for Plans approved a total ceiling of only 158 staff personnel by the end of June 1960; and in August of 1960, Chief, WH Division forwarded a revised staffing guide, calling for a total of 274 positions and requesting that "as soon after 15 August as is possible, a total of 40 additional staff personnel"

be added to the 158 who were then on duty -- making a new total of 198.

Although Mr. Bissell approved the recommended increment, he nonetheless wrote a memorandum to C. Tracy Barnes, the ADDP/A, suggesting that Barnes and Dick Helms (surprisingly) take a close look at the JMATE staffing pattern to see if there were areas of duplication, particularly between the field bases and Headquarters. The DDP suggested that in the areas of FI and PM there might be slots in either the Forward Operations Base in Miami or in JMOARSMAN -- the Panama Training Site -- where possibly the staffs could be transferred during slack periods to conduct similar operations in other parts of the JMATE operation.* 127/

RELEASED PER P.L-102-526(JFK ACT)
NARA JR DATE 6/17/95

---

* Lest the reader be confused by the term "Forward Operations Base," this was the JMWAVE activity in the Miami area, which continued to operate subsequent to the Bay of Pigs. At the same time that the Bay of Pigs operation was getting under way, there was considerable emphasis from various individuals in Headquarters for establishment of a "Forward Command Post," which also might be located in the Miami area, possibly in the communications complex. Some even suggested the possibility of establishing a sub-command post in a third country. In any event, no Forward Command Post was established. 128/

By early November 1960, as the concept of the operation was shifting from one of guerrilla warfare and infiltration to invasion, the staffing pattern for WH/4 was again increased. Mr. Bissell authorizing a total of 308 positions. Even as he signed the approval, however, Mr. Bissell noted his reservations, saying:

> I have signed this request to indicate my approval, but do so with a good deal of concern. I realize that this is a very major and top priority activity and I also realize that the senior officers engaged in it continue to be heavily overworked. On the other hand, I am fearful that the addition of large numbers of personnel will not in fact reduce the load on those individuals who are most overworked, but may instead create additional burdens of management without contributing significantly to the success of the underlying activities. I am concerned also that we may be simply running out of suitable people in the Agency in certain categories. Accordingly, I urge you to re-examine even the double-starred positions in the staffing guide submitted with your request to see whether they are all in fact of a high order of essentiality.* 129/

RELEASED PER P.L.-102-526(JFK ACT)
NARA JA DATE 4/17/05

---

* Much of the staffing problem, of course, traces back to the failure of the DDP to insure early on that only the best people be assigned to the WH/4 project. As early as August of 1960, it had been indicated that the DDP might be leaning toward the use of directed assignments, but nothing ever came of this. 130/

Even before Mr. Bissell's memorandum of early November 1960, indicating the possibility that experts in certain areas might no longer be available from within the Agency, proposals had gone forward requesting permission for the use of American contract personnel in the maritime operations. Unlike the brouhaha that was precipitated by the early suggestions for the use of American volunteers from the ground forces, the authorization for the use of US contracts in maritime activities apparently was granted without much debate. The statement of the requirements for the use of the US contracts indicated that US citizens would be put under contract to act not only as trainers for the crews of LCI's, LCU's, LCVP's, and SK's, but also, that they would serve in key positions

> as LCI captains, LCI diesel engineers, and LCU coxwains during training and operations, where qualified Cubans cannot be obtained. This would require their entering Cuban coastal waters and, on occasions, touching on Cuban beaches, when operations so require.
>
> It is essential for operations that these key positions be held by qualified and dependable men. At this time, it is not expected that Cuban trainees qualified for such positions or possessing the necessary aptitude and character to permit successful training will be found. If

RELEASED PER P.L-102-526(JFK ACT)
NARA JA DATE 4/17/95

they are located, the use of U.S. contract personnel will correspondingly be cut down. Staff personnel will assist in the training of all crews but will not be used in operations. 131/

Not only were such contract employees authorized, but by early November 1960 a cable from Headquarters to the Forward Operations Base noted:

> In view degree risk involved rendezvous-type mission request Case Officer advise all Maritime contract personnel bonus this type mission be hereafter $100.00. Bonus for Cuban territory beach landings or caching would remain $500.00. 132/

By the early fall of 1960, the question of rotation of staff personnel for Project JMATE had become a serious matter. Many of those who had initially joined the project had come in on 90-day rotation periods, and in a cable to Headquarters, Ernie Sparks, the overall Liaison Officer for Project JMATE for COS Guatemala, requested that Headquarters approve a rotational plan since:

> Most personnel adjusted family and business problems to period they told they be absent and fact they on duty seven days a week as well as being confined to training areas which lack recreation facilities. 133/

Bill Eisemann, who was Chief of Support for WH/4, was particularly critical of the 90-day TDY assignments, saying:

RELEASED PER P.L-102-526(JFK ACT)
NARA JA DATE 4/7/05

They [the DDP] would bring a man in, and then another man would come in to replace him. It was really a tremendous task to keep up with it, because a lot of these people had personal problems. In some cases they would cable and request release from their assignment for personal reasons. We attempted to satisfy most of these requests. Herb Juul was the assigned Personnel Officer within the project. He had to constantly keep a check on the location of our personnel, and when their time was up for replacement, he would then visit with the Clandestine Services, and also the Support components, and give them a listing of the names of potential TDY returnees. The Support components and Clandestine Services then provided names of people who would be replacements. That was a hell of a task, now, believe me. When you have a full time project running 15 months or more, you have people returning on a 90 day basis, and constantly being replaced ... you can't expect the greatest efficiency in operations. 134/

RELEASED PER P.L-102-526(JFK ACT)
NARA JA DATE 6/17/95

programs with reference to the Cuban problem. 75/ About this same time, Allen Dulles made known to the Special Group his displeasure that the Department failed to consult with the Agency prior to announcing the reappointment of Philip Bonsal as US Ambassador to Cuba. 76/

The Rubottom plan apparently had some impact, for by the end of April 1960, Gordon Gray was calling on Douglas Dillon, the Undersecretary of State, to find someone in the Department -- Dillon himself -- to be "constantly seized of the Cuban problem and who would take steps to assure that all of the activities of various groups were in harness and that all needed decisions were made when needed."* 77/ Mr. Gray also specified some of the problems which would face a Chief of Staff on the Cuban activity, noting:

> [Livingston Merchant] has set up two groups, one under the chairmanship of Mr. Mallory. In addition, there is the Special Group, of which Livie is a member, and in his absence Ray Hare sits. Further, there is a special activity

RELEASED PER P.L.-102-526(JFK ACT)
NARA JR DATE 6/17/05

---

* This, of course, apparently ignores or disregards the creation of WH/4 and the responsibilities designated to the Agency by Gray's boss, President Eisenhower.

> proceeding under the chairmanship of Bob Anderson, with which you may or may not be familiar. Allen Dulles has a particular liaison with Bob in this matter. The Defense Department, of course, has many interests. 78/

The suggestion that Undersecretary Douglas Dillon be made Chief of Staff responsible for coordinating the programs with reference to Cuba did not sit well with the Agency; and after the matter had been surfaced at a meeting of the Special Group on 28 April, Chief, WH/4 prepared a memorandum stating in part with reference to Dillon:

> The Agency would not look with favor on this arrangement. Mr. Barnes and the Director, therefore, plan to go over to State on Monday afternoon [2 May 1960] and head off this new development. Mr. Barnes believes that a short paper setting forth what we are already doing in the fields of coordination and liaison should be adequate to support their point of view. 79/

Whether resistance to the suggestion that Dillon become Chief of Staff for the nation's anti-Castro program was in itself distasteful to the Agency or whether it was simply opposition to the idea that State should take over the direction of a program which would basically be carried out by the Agency is not revealed in the records. Presumably both elements

RELEASED PER P.L-102-526(JFK ACT)
NARA JA DATE 4/7/95

entered into the picture. In any event, Gordon Gray seemed cavalier in disregarding the creation of WH/4 and the liaison arrangements which had already been made. (See Appendix D.)* But whatever the explanation, Mr. Dillon did not become Chief of Staff for the nation's Cuban program.

RELEASED PER P.L. 102-526(JFK ACT)
NARA JR DATE 4/7/95

Although it was not included on the list of Agencies with which CIA maintained liaison and contacts at this time, mention should be made of the CIA-FBI contacts concerning Cuba. Technically the FBI was prohibited from engaging in intelligence operations overseas, but in mid-June 1960, Chief, WH/4 revealed that the FBI reportedly had plans for installing a stay-behind network -- using Mexicans and Cubans -- to be activated in case diplomatic relations between the US and Cuba were broken. Chief, WH/4 suggested that the CI Staff get in touch with the FBI Liaison Officer, Sam Papich and ask for an explanation of the Bureau's plan. 80/ About the same time that Chief WH/4 was evincing concern about FBI activities in Cuba, Chief, WH Division noted in

---

* Appendix D, page 332.

a memorandum for the Acting Director of Central Intelligence that:

> A thorough investigation has been made of the relations between the Havana Station and the Havana Office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation. It has been concluded that the operations of the FBI have neither interferred with nor conflicted with the Station's operations. 81/

Col. King's memo also stated the Bureau's long-time contacts in the Cuban area were a benefit to both the Bureau and to the Station pointing out that frequently the Station was called on to participate in, or actually undertake, the debriefing of various individuals who had come into the FBI offices to volunteer information. On occasion, the Bureau had even turned over specific operations to the Station.

Chief, WH Division went even further when, during the course of one of the weekly interdepartmental meetings in State, it was suggested by Mr. Gray and Mr. Mallory that the FBI was exceeding its jurisdiction, and that perhaps this should be brought before the NSC for consideration. Col. King reported that he remained non-committal at this time, but did point out that he thought the jurisdictional issue should be "soft-pedaled." He did say, however, that

RELEASED PER P.L-102-526(JFK ACT)
NARA JA DATE 6/17/95

RELEASED PER P.L. 102-526(JFK ACT)
NARA JR DATE 4/17/95

the memorandum he had prepared on this subject was being held in the files should questions about this particular Bureau activity ever be raised. King also recommended that the Agency not take the initiative in raising the question. 82/

Neither Col. King, nor anyone else involved in the anti-Castro operation ever registered a formal protest against the FBI's activities in the Havana area. By mid-summer 1960, the relationship became even closer, particularly as the Agency expanded activities at the Forward Operations Base, JMASH (later JMWAVE) in Miami. In one report concerning the number of the Cuban exiles in the Miami area who were under suspicion of -- or were -- working for Castro, or who were trying desperately to get support from one or another US Agency, an FBI agent made a rather interesting forecast to the CIA representative with whom he was exchanging information. According to the report from Miami, an FBI agent

> told me that his personal opinion was that it would be virtually impossible, if not completely impossible, to bring about the overthrow of the Castro regime using Cuban exiles. He thought the only solution to the problem, and the one that stood the best chance of success, was to

go in with the US Marines. He admitted that this was only his personal opinion, but he felt that in view of his experience and contact with the Cuban exiles, he had a good point. I could not help agree with him. 83/

Agent George Davis apparently was extremely interested in full cooperation with the Agency, quickly accepting the Agency representative's proposal that they visit the FBI offices once or twice each week to compare notes; and the CIA field representative, in turn, agreed to pass on to Mr. Davis in the FBI any information which the Agency might acquire pertaining to FBI interests.*

RELEASED PER P.L-102-526(JFK ACT)
NARA JR DATE 6/17/95

---

* The Forward Operations Base (FOB) opened in May 1960 in Coral Gables, Florida, and it was the second FOB that had been established since the formation of WH Division -- the initial base having been set up during the anti-Arbenz operation in Guatemala in 1953-1954. In general, the Miami FOB paralleled the organization of Headquarters with FI, CI, CA, Support, and PM units. FOB reported directly to the Chief, WH Division, not to Jake Esterline, Chief, WH/4. Initially the satellite communications center for relaying commo between Headquarters and the field -- including facilities in the Florida Keys concerning the maritime operations -- was established; and ultimately the commo link would connect Headquarters with the operations in Guatemala and Nicaragua. The cover firm for the base, was Clarence A. DePew & Sons, a notional cover for an organization engaged in classified research.

A series of some 32 reports has been prepared on the FOB, and the reports are available through the Records Management Officer of WH Division. These
(footnote continued on following page)

TOP SECRET

In addition to its concern with the interests of other government agencies in the Cuban problem, in mid-summer of 1960 the Agency also was required to provide intelligence briefings for the Presidential and Vice-Presidential candidates of the major political parties. While the intelligence briefings were scheduled to consider the world situation, considerable emphasis was being given to both Cuba and the Dominican Republic. In preparation for Mr. Dulles' briefing of the Democratic nominee, John F. Kennedy, on 23 July 1960, WH/4 prepared a detailed Cuban briefing paper touching on the principal aspects of the exile organization, the propaganda plan, penetration of Cuba by personnel from communist countries (including the Soviet Union, Red China, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, and East Germany), and the play that Castro was making in the Latin American world for pro-communist sympathizers. In addition, emphasis also was given to the

RELEASED PER P.L-102-526(JFK ACT)
NARA JA DATE 6/17/95

---

reports deal basically with the period between 1962 and 1968; and while there is some feeling that the story of the Bay of Pigs operation should go into extensive detail on the initial operations of the FOB, this author has chosen not to do so, focusing instead on only those broad aspects of the problem relating to the Miami Base. 84/

TOP SECRET

planned program for paramilitary training and operations under the aegis of CIA. Insofar as can be determined, however, there is no indication that in his pre-election briefing of the Democratic Presidential candidates that Mr. Dulles went into any specifics on the Agency's anti-Castro plans. 85/

As mentioned previously, one of the continuing problems requiring coordination within the Executive Branch was the increasing budget demands for Project JMATE. From an estimate of some $2.5 million of budgeted and reserve funds, which had been made available for the program by mid-August of 1960, Mr. Bissell appeared at a special Group meeting, requesting that an additional $10.75 million be released from reserve funds to meet the ever-increasing needs, particularly for the paramilitary and propaganda programs. The decision of the Special Group following Mr. Bissell's appeal was that:

> This matter should be laid before the appropriate higher authorities and a presentation would be arranged hopefully within the next ten days. This was believed to be wise, not because any actions involving major political risks were to be taken in the near future, but because the Agency would soon become committed to various substantial expenditures which

~~TOP SECRET~~

should not be undertaken without a reasonable assurance that the operation was to go forward. 86/

On 22-23 August of 1960, after discussions with Mr. Stans and Mr. Macy, the Agency was notified that the requested $10 million for FY 61 would be made available from the Agency Reserve for Contingencies.* 87/

C. Cooperation and Challenge

As already mentioned, immediately following the Eisenhower decision to promote the anti-Castro program, there was a considerable degree of cooperation between CIA and other of the concerned Agencies -- the Department of Defense, the Department of State, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Immigration and Naturalization Service, and others. As WH/4 continued to expand and develop the various programs -- propaganda, covert action, staybehind networks, and paramilitary operations -- there were ever increasing contacts between CIA and the representatives of other

---

* One explanation for the sharply increasing demand for reserve funds may lie in the fact that materiel was being written off upon issue, rather than upon consumption -- an aspect of the operation that was explained to the author by William E. Eisemann, formerly Chief, Support WH/4. 88/

~~TOP SECRET~~

government agencies. Perhaps the best way to describe the period from the summer of 1960 until the early fall was as a period of cooperation and challenge. Cooperation because the needs of the Agency represented National Policy. Challenge to most if not all of CIA's proposals -- proposals which concerned the nature of the propaganda effort, the size and make-up of the exile military force which was being organized, the location of training sites, the types of technical materiel (including aircraft) being requested, and, most important by the end of this period, the specific nature of the military operation which was to be mounted against Fidel Castro.

By early June 1960, the program for paramilitary training of Cuban exiles was jumped from some 60 to 500 or more trainees -- even though the actual training of the initial instructor cadre at Fort Randolph in Panama had not yet begun and the FRD was only in the initial stages of negotiation for PM and commo training facilities in Guatemala. It was anticipated that the increased number of PM trainees would be recruited out of the Miami area, from other Latin American countries where Cubans had taken up residence,

RELEASED PER P.L-102-526(JFK ACT)
NARA JA DATE 6/17/05

and from others who might be recruited inside Cuba. The emphasis on the PM training at this time was to be on weapons, demolitions, sabotage, and guerrilla warfare tactics; and the weapons familiarization was to be with the M-1 carbine, the Garand and Springfield rifles, the Thompson sub-machine gun, and the .45 Colt automatic pistol. This, of course, was the weapons mix in the Agency's stockpile of standard arms packs. 89/

RELEASED PER P.L-102-526(JFK ACT)
NARA JR
DATE 6/11/95

It must be presumed that the call for increases in the number of PM trainees was related to the continued importation of Soviet weapons and technicians and the increasing strength of the Communist Party in Cuba. An NIE written in mid-June 1960 on "The Situation in Cuba," for example noted that the Castro regime was "deeply and increasingly influenced by Communists .. no longer any prospect of democratic government under his [Fidel Castro's] regime." As was past estimates, this particular NIE was unable to answer the question of whether Castro himself was a Communist. The NIE also mentioned that no strong opposition leader to the Castro regime had emerged, nor did the opposition at that time "pose a serious threat to

the regime." One weakness touched on by the National Estimate concerned the Castro militia which was characterized as "only partially armed, and for the most part poorly trained ... [and] appears to have little, if any, effectiveness as an organized combat force in conventional operations." For either of the foregoing reasons, perhaps, an increase in the number of PM personnel might (a) assist in bringing a strong dissident leader to the fore, or (b) develop the capability to overcome the Castro militia. 90/

The question of an increased number of PM trainees surfaced in a late August briefing for President Eisenhower, Secretaries Gates, Dillon, and Anderson, and Generals Persons, Lemnitzer, and Goodpaster by the DCI and Mr. Bissell. After President Eisenhower's National Security Adviser, Gordon Gray, summarized developments since the March announcement of the anti-Castro program, Mr. Dulles provided some specifics concerning the organization of the FRD and its principals, noting that the Headquarters for the FRD had been established in Mexico City, in lieu of the invitation of President Ydigoras of Guatemala to permit the FRD to operate from his country. Mr. Dulles

RELEASED PER P.L.-102-526(JFK ACT)
NARA JA DATE 4/17/95

~~TOP SECRET~~

noted that at this time, it was particularly important that the US presence in Guatemala not be revealed. When the discussion turned to the PM forces, the Department of Defense representative, Mr. Gates, made it quite clear that he was concerned about the possibility of US military personnel being involved directly in the military operations inside Cuba. Mr. Bissell responded that US military personnel in third countries would be used only as instructors -- not as cadre leaders for either an invasion or a guerrilla warfare effort.

Bissell did stress, however, that there was need for a standby force, preferably of non-Americans, with special training in guerrilla warfare to provide a leadership complement to the Cubans when "push" came to "shove," a recommendation that provoked some differences of opinion during the course of this briefing for the President when it was suggested that US officers might be required to direct these forces. Mr. Dulles proposed withholding this discussion until the Agency and the JCS could talk the matter over. Mr. Gray seemed to be determined that the issue of the force level and make-up be resolved

RELEASED PER P.L.-102-526(JFK ACT)
NARA JR DATE 4/17/95

at this particular time. According to his own report of his position at this meeting,

> Mr. Gray pointed out that it would be unwise to mount any kind of an operation without the determination to see it through and that an abortive effort would be worse than no effort at all. He therefore thought that if this backup force was essential to ultimate success, full consideration should be given to it at this stage in the planning. Mr. Dulles again urged that a decision on this be deferred.* 91/

In support of Mr. Gray and in some contradiction to Mr. Bissell's view that perhaps the Cuban PM force would be able to carry off the effort without any outside help, the President was reported to have indicated that

> He would go along so long as the Joint Chiefs, Defense, State, and CIA think we have a good chance of being successful. He wouldn't care much about this kind of cost [the $10 million increase noted earlier]; indeed, he said he would defend this kind of action against all comers and that if we could be sure of freeing the Cubans from this incubus, $25 million might be a small price to pay.

---

* In light of today's relations between the United States and other of the major world powers with the third countries, Gordon Gray displayed -- in the summer of 1960 -- a degree of foresight with which he has never been properly credited. For he noted at that time that if the US failed to deal firmly with Cuba, there was an obvious danger that other small nations would be encouraged to undertake harassments of the major powers. 92/

RELEASED PER P.L-102-526(JFK ACT)
NARA JR DATE 6/17/95

~~TOP SECRET~~

The President concluded the meeting, by saying that he would like to urge caution with respect to the danger of making false moves, with the result of starting something before we were ready for it.* 93/

One of the most persistent problems which was to surface by early fall of 1960 concerned the need for the anti-Castro operation itself, and the bulk of the questioning came from the Department of State, principally from Thomas Mann, who soon was to become the Assistant Secretary of State for American Republic Affairs. Mann already had been involved in some of the prior discussions concerning the anti-Castro activity in his capacity as Assistant Secretary for

RELEASED PER P.L-102-526(JFK ACT)
NARA JR DATE 6/17/95

---

* In his memorandum of a meeting with the President on 17 August 1960, Gordon Gray noted that in discussing the CIA meeting planned for 18 August, that in addition to Messrs. Dulles and Bissell, a third CIA officer might possibly be in attendance; and he also noted that the Vicè-President had been invited to attend the briefing. According to Gray's record, however, neither the Vice-President nor the third CIA representative were in attendance at the briefing of 18 August. The attendance of the Director and Mr. Bissell, but with no CIA representative from WH/4, was further illustration of Jake Esterline's criticism that at too many high level briefings, CIA's representatives were individuals who, high ranks notwithstanding, were the furthest from the operation -- yet they were responsible for informing the nation's policymakers about the details of the anti-Castro program. 94/

It is also interesting to note that this off-the-record meeting which was arranged by Gordon Gray lasted only 23 minutes, and this included at least a short time for a brief discussion related to Francis Gary Powers. 95/

RELEASED PER P.L. 102-526 (JFK ACT)
NARA JA DATE 6/17/05

Economic Affairs. In early September of 1960, Chief, WH/4 learned from a member of the Department of State that Mr. Mann was going to ask for a restudy of the basic concept of JMATE, or, if he did not ask for that re-evaluation, he would ask for immediate review and rescheduling of the timetable for the JMATE operation. At this time and in view of the lack of progress both in developing any great cohesion within the FRD in organizing the dissidents within Cuba, the questions seemed in order. The reaction of Chief, WH/4 however, was that an attempt should be made to blunt Mr. Mann's efforts, noting for example:

> The degree to which we are already committed in JMARC would pose a monumental security problem alone if we were suddenly instructed to cease and desist from further activity. As of this moment, they have well in excess of 200 people engaged in air, ground, and communications training in Guatemala. Additionally, our across-the-board propaganda activities are being stepped up daily. A drastic rescheduling of either activity, therefore, could bring about serious repercussions. 96/

The precise nature of these "serious repercussions" was not spelled out. As time passed, however, it would be charged that the cessation of the Agency-sponsored training activities would loose a flood of

RELEASED PER P.L.-102-526(JFK ACT)
NARA JR DATE 4/17/95

Cubans back into the exile community; and they would charge that the United States feared to undertake the task of ousting Fidel Castro. This, in turn, would mean that the US would lose face in the eyes of the Democratic Latin American republics. Jake Esterline speculated that Mann did not believe that the Cubans were willing to support an insurrection against Castro. A suggestion which was made to counter the possible Mann proposals was that:

> To strengthen our position, therefore, we are bending every effort to get at least one supply airdrop into the target country, prior to the Assistant Secretary's return to the United States ... Successful action in this area should weigh heavily on Assistant Secretary Mann's alleged new attitude. 97/

Just how one -- or even more -- successful air drops would in any way influence Mann's opinion about the receptiveness of the Cuban population to a possible insurrection effort was not explained. That there were dissidents on the island was unquestioned, the problem was the degree of strength and effectiveness that they might be able to demonstrate.*

---

* Fortunately for the continuation of Project JMATE, the hurry-up air drop to which Jake Esterline referred did not set the criteria for the continuation or dissolution of the project. This air drop was a complete
(footnote continued on following page)

Mr. Mann would continue to raise questions concerning the feasibility of discontinuing the training in Guatemala, and in on-going meetings with Agency representatives including the DCI, the DDP, Chief, WH, as well as Chief, WH/4 and others, Mann continued to raise questions about the effect on Project JMATE should all the American trainers and Cuban trainees be pulled out of Guatemala immediately. Mann also questioned the exact timing for Project JMATE. As he raised such questions, the Assistant Secretary for Latin American Affairs was informed by CIA that they would much prefer that the training of the Cuban exiles take place in US bases, both for purposes of security and for efficiency. But they also pointed out that it had been the decision for the Special Group and the "highest levels" that such training should take place in third countries, rather than in the US. Mann persisted, however, suggesting that the question of maintaining the training base in

RELEASED PER P.L.-102-526(JFK ACT)
NARA JA DATE 4/17/95

---

and total bust, the supplies being dropped to the guerrillas fell into the hands of Castro's forces; and the aircraft itself made a forced landing in Mexico and was not recovered. See Volume I of this history, Air Operations.

~~TOP SECRET~~

Guatemala or removing it to the US should be raised again with the Special Group. The Agency's representatives agreed to this suggestion "with the strictest proviso that no move from Guatemala could or should be made until adequate staging facilities in the Zone of the Interior have been prepared." 98/

Tracy Barnes put the question of moving the base from Guatemala to the Zone of the Interior in a somewhat different context than had been suggested by Esterline and J. C. King. Barnes recommended consideration be given, among other items, to:

> The fact that a move from the present training sites to the US should not be made too hurriedly and the importance of avoiding a decision at a later date that the training in the US is a bar to operational use. I realize that this latter point would be a complete contradiction of the present theory but, after all, there is an intervening election; and political views can shift so that everything possible should be done to avoid our getting ourselves into the box where we move to the US for one reason and then find that the US move is used against us to prevent or limit ultimate operations.* 100/

One additional point which was made by Jake Esterline and J. C. King in their conversations with

---

Source reference No. 99 not used.

RELEASED PER P.L. 102-526(JFK ACT)
NARA JA DATE 6/17/95

Secretary Mann was that the sudden pullout of the training program in Guatemala might very well lead to the overthrow of President Ydigoras by the pro-communist elements which were already in evidence in opposition to the Ydigoras regime. It was indicated that should the troop training be moved from Guatemala to the United States, 300 Guatemalan troops would be trained as a special security force for the Guatemalan government. 101/

During these discussions in the late fall of 1960, Mann also raised the issue of economic sanctions which had been touched on in the early spring. At this time however, the Agency's representatives believed that Mann was talking in terms of a one to three year quarantine period, in an attempt to disrupt the Cuban economy -- a quarantine, however, which would not interfere with the flow of goods from the Communist countries. This was a point of some contention between State and CIA, with the Agency people convinced that the Soviet Union would make up any deficiencies that tended to impede seriously the economy of Castro's Cuba. 102/

In the context of a possible move of the training facilities to the United States, Chief, WH prepared

RELEASED PER P.L-102-526(JFK ACT)
NARA JR DATE 4/7/05

TOP SECRET

RELEASED PER P.L.102-526(JFK ACT)
NARA JA DATE 6/17/95

a memorandum for the DDP indicating that the need for training bases to be located in the southern part of the United States should include an infantry training base capable of handling 3,000 men with range facilities, tactical training areas, an airfield for training air and ground crews in the utilization of B-26, C-46 and C-54 aircraft, aerial gunnery and bomb range facilities, and maritime training and staging facilities. It was suggested that the airfield logistical base should be located in southern Florida, and permission to use Ramey Air Force Base in Puerto Rico to stage black over-flights to Cuba should be obtained. The maritime facilities would be located on Vieques Island, Puerto Rico and also in southern Florida.

In a meeting with the Special Group, the Deputy Director for Central Intelligence put forth the proposals concerning the movement of training bases to the United States; and although he was supported by the Department of Defense representatives -- Mr. Douglas and Gen. Lansdale -- Livingston Merchant of the Department of State, normally one of the hard liners of the Department, seemed to have ambivalent

~~TOP SECRET~~

feelings at this time about the training program. Possibly Merchant was succumbing to Mann's arguments suggesting that the time for military action was so far down the line that US efforts should be concentrated on economic sanctions at this time. 103/ Adolf A. Berle, who would become one of the Kennedy administration's principal advisers on Latin America, also seemed to be swayed by Tom Mann's argument in favor of economic sanctions, Berle suggesting that the embargo be expanded to include the shipment of arms and ammunition both to Cuba and from Cuba to other parts of Latin America. 104/

RELEASED PER P.L-102-526(JFK ACT)
NARA JA DATE 6/17/95

Although it has been indicated that the Department of Defense would apparently support the Agency in its request for the establishment of training facilities in the continental United States, DOD did balk at the use of military personnel in third country areas in support of Project JMATE. Although Deputy Secretary of Defense James H. Douglas began to question whether his department had actually been committed to support CIA's anti-Castro effort, it seems clear that policy approval for the use of Department of Defense personnel in Project JMATE had been established

with the approval of the President's comprehensive program of covert action against Fidel Castro in March 1960. 105/

The difficulties encountered with the Department of Defense concerning the assignment of Special Force trainers from the US Army to the Guatemalan training bases has already been spelled out in considerable detail in another volume, but even as the Department of Defense was taking a negative attitude toward the possible use of DOD personnel in either training or combat activities, the Agency was proposing the recruitment of either American or foreign volunteers to serve as combat troops for Project JMATE. The Bureau of American Republic Affairs of Department of State, however, put the quietus on the plan for obtaining foreign volunteers; but J. Foster Collins, the Chief of the Covert Action Staff, suggested to the Deputy Director for Plans that possibly he (the DDP) could convince Livingston Merchant of the need to re-examine the Department of State policy.*

RELEASED PER P.L-102-526(JFK ACT)
NARA JR DATE 6/17/05

* The problem of the Special Force trainers is discussed in Volume II of this history, Participation in the Conduct of Foreign Policy.

RELEASED PER P.L-102-526(JFK ACT)
NARA JA DATE 6/17/05

Collins was particularly enthusiastic about the prospects for recruiting Germans, Greeks, and Turks to serve as volunteers; but in the end, State's view prevailed, and there were no contingents of either American or foreign volunteers. 106/

During the period of buildup and organization of WH/4 for the JMATE effort against Castro, the Agency encountered some problems with the US Navy, but none of these were as serious as the difficulties encountered with the Department of Defense per se, the Air Force, or the United States Army. The existence of the United States Naval Base at Guantanamo Bay in Cuba presented an unusual situation in view of the planning that was taking place. Apparently, however, there was no disagreement between the Agency and the Navy that prohibited Guantanamo from being used to mount anti-Castro activities or from being used as a safe haven area for those who might have been detected engaging in sabotage, propaganda, or other anti-Castro activities. The purpose of such restrictions, of course, was to prevent the Cubans from claiming violations of the legal and binding international agreement between the United States

RELEASED PER P.L. 102-526(JFK ACT)
NARA JR DATE 6/17/05

and the Government of Cuba over the lease of Guantanamo Bay. So serious was this issue in fact, that the Agency agreed

> that all Cubans participating in overflights of Cuba would be told that Guantanamo Naval Base was not to be used as a safe haven, and that if they landed there, they would be turned over to the Cuban authorities. 107/

The Guantanamo Base also presented a major difficulty for the Department of State. Evidence of this surfaced in early October of 1960 when it was reported that during a meeting of the State Working Group on Cuba a suggestion was put forward that the US try to influence Latin American nations to approve US retention of the base. One proposal had been made that this be done through the Inter-American Defense Board (IADB), where a resolution apparently was about to be introduced asking for a definition of the relations between Cuba and the USSR, with the expectation that this might force Cuba's resignation from membership on the IADB. According to Col. John F. Mallard, the Agency's liaison officer with the State Working Group:

> In addition, State desires that the IADB, make some statement on the importance of Guantanamo Bay to Latin American hemisphere defense. This statement would, in effect, give Latin American approval to U.S. retention of this base. 108/

RELEASED PER P.L. 102-526(JFK ACT)
NARA JA DATE 4/17/97

B. Forging the Tool

Following President Eisenhower's approval of the anti-Castro program which had evolved from the numerous discussions, meetings, and briefings previously mentioned, the Agency's leadership then faced the problem of acting directly to implement the anti-Castro program. Problems which had been discussed philosophically prior to this time now had to be put to the test of practicality. Among the problems of principal importance during the period from March to September 1960 were the following:

The establishment of the leadership of WH/4 and the acquisition of personnel for WH/4;

Extensive coordination between Agency representatives and representatives of other US Government Agencies and, at the same time, a high level of intra-Agency coordination.

The initiation of a paramilitary training program for those Cubans who would be directly involved in helping to dispose of the Castro Government:

Attempting to establish project parameters and to give proper consideration to possible changes in the concept of the program as time passed;

And, finally, to retain the credibility and viability of the operation despite numerous wild haired proposals that were being put forward at various times during the months under study -- proposals which never should have been offered let alone given any serious consideration.

As previously noted, WH/4 was established by Col. King in January of 1960; however, it was not until 24 March 1960 that Mr. Bissell apparently officially got around to approving the new Branch, for in a memorandum for the Deputy Director for Support (DDS), it was noted:

> The SSA-DDS has advised of the DDP's approval of the creation of a new operational Branch, the abolishment of an existing Section, and the creation of a new Section within the WH Division Headquarters Staffing complement.

The 15 new positions required by the Branch would be more than offset by the decrease in the DDP complement.

The same memorandum indicated that the Wage and Salary Division of the Office of Personnel had approved the various grades that had been proposed and then the memorandum went on to state:

> The approval limits the usage of the requested positions to the duration of the

RELEASED PER P.L-102-526(JFK ACT)
NARA JA DATE 4/17/95

RELEASED PER P.L. 102-526(JFK ACT)
NARA JA DATE 6/11/95

Cuban crisis; after which all the positions in the new Branch and Section will be reviewed for reclassification purposes. 54/

The question of financing and budget for project JMATE had already caused concern among those responsible for the formulation of the anti-Castro policy, and soon after the President's approval of the project, the question of budget and finance surfaced. By 24 March 1960, the Deputy Director for Support noted that: "Jack Earman advised me that the Director had approved of the paper calling for the release of $900,000 from the reserve for Project JMARC." 55/ Indeed the Director had signed such a paper calling for the $900,000 as "an unprogrammed requirement for which other funds are not available." 56/

In his memo to the Comptroller concerning the release of funds from the Agency reserve, the Director was also careful to point out that it would be the responsiblity of Chief, WH Division to certify that the funds had been expended as specified for the project; that additionally, the DDP or his designee would have to approve each certification; that the only Headquarters file on the budget for the project would be maintained by WH/Division; and that the

file would be complete as to the purpose of the expenditure, the date, those who were involved as payees, and any other details; and finally that access to this financial file would be "limited to persons specifically authorized by the Deputy Director (Plans)."* 57/

In the first meeting following the Presidential approval of the anti-Castro program, Jake Esterline called the members of WH/4 together to announce that the program had been given the crypt of JMARC; and he further pointed out that 1 May 1960 was the target date for the beginning of training at Fort Randolph in Panama. (This date was predicated on the assumption of a satisfactory report from the Inspection Team which was to travel to Fort Randolph on 27 March.) Medical and security officers were to be assigned to the training base and the communications link was to be established with Headquarters. In this early

RELEASED PER P.L-102-526(JFK ACT)
NARA JA DATE 4/7/95

---

* Unlike some suggestions that had been forwarded by the WH/4 Finance Officer, Michael King, the Director's Memorandum placed budgetary responsibility with the DDP and Chief, WH Division. Chief, WH/4 was not even included on the routing for the Director's Memorandum. The WH/4 Financial Officer, on the other hand, had suggested that certain of the responsibilities for approval of funding be given to the project Chief, or the Chief, WH/Division. 58/

meeting, Esterline emphasized that training at the Fort Randolph and Fort Sherman areas of Panama was going to be extremely limited; and since there would be no training areas in the United States, third country training activities would need to be established. He emphasized again that secrecy was of paramount importance if the operation was to succeed, and stressed that the establishment of a Government-in-exile was a key point to making the planned operation credible. Esterline further indicated that such a government hopefully could be announced by the early part of April and that the Headquarters for such a government could be located either in Puerto Rico or Costa Rica.

Esterline also made an appeal for personnel to staff both the Panama training activity and Base Two, the Coral Gables Headquarters which later would be known as JMWAVE. One interesting point made at this first meeting was that:

> Mr. [Scudder] Georgia reported that the DDS Offices concerned had nominated nearly all of the personnel required by 1 and 15 April respectively. Action was being taken to make all these available at once ... [and] it was agreed that DDS representatives would meet once a week

RELEASED PER P.L-102-526(JFK ACT)
NARA JA DATE 4/17/95

~~TOP SECRET~~

to review activities, determine the status of commitments, and prepare a brief report for Chief, Branch 4. 59/

In another Branch meeting soon after the one just mentioned, Esterline reemphasized, as he and others would do throughout the course of the operation, the need for security practices designed to protect the fact of Agency involvement in this covert operation. He also indicated the considerable degree of cooperation which already was being required from other services. Dave Phillips provided a specific example of this, emphasizing that without the close cooperation of the United States Navy, it would have been difficult to transport the two radio transmitters which were going to be installed on Swan Island. Moreover, Phillips reported that a crew of Seabees would be responsible for constructing the facilities to house the transmitters and the quarters for personnel who would conduct the propaganda effort from Swan Island. Because the activities then established on Swan Island were under the control of the Federal Aviation Administration, C. Tracy Barnes (the A/DDP/A) was to meet with the Director of FAA, Gen. Elwood Quesada, to clear with him the problems that were

RELEASED PER P.L. 102-526 (JFK ACT)
NARA JA DATE 4/17/95

~~TOP SECRET~~

RELEASED PER P.L.102-526(JFK ACT)
NARA JA DATE 4/17/95

involved in establishing this Agency activity on the island. 60/ Coordination also had to be effected with the United States Coast Guard in order that there be no interference with maritime activities; and the Immigration and Naturalization Service was alerted to the need to facilitate the entry of Cuban defectors. 61/

As attempts were being made to establish the parameters for the operations against Castro, a most prescient memorandum was directed to Chief, WH/4 from Paul Oberst, Chief, Covert Action, WH Division. Oberst apparently had been associated with PBSUCCESS, the project which resulted in the ouster of the Arbenz Government in Guatemala in 1954; and recalling some of the "pitfalls and counter-productive aspects" of that particular operation, Oberst wrote as follows:

> I have the impression that our basic JMARC plan commits us to a rather firm timetable. In my judgment, we should have great flexibility in deciding the appropriate time for kicking off any paramilitary operations. Before such operations are initiated, we should have firm evidence that our propaganda and political action operations have irrevocably undermined Castro's prestige, both in *Cuba and abroad*. We should not initiate paramilitary actions until we are convinced that they will not enable

Castro to recuperate lost prestige and rally local and foreign sympathy and support. Generally speaking, current area attitudes toward the Castro regime are satisfactory from our [CIA] point of view. However, this could change radically and rapidly, if there are any premature paramilitary actions. When the time comes for paramilitary activity, we should make every effort to conceal any invasion actions. To avoid or minimize Castro's counter propaganda, the paramilitary operations must appear to be an *internal uprising by dissident elements within Cuba.* This, of course, would require clandestine infiltration of personnel and arms before the hostitlities begin.

RELEASED PER P.L-102-526(JFK ACT)
NARA JR DATE 6/11/95

In my opinion, Castro will inevitably charge the US with responsibility for JMARC operations, and many Latin Americans and other foreign observers will be inclined to accept such charges with or without supporting evidence. Therefore, what we need is a massive diversionary effort that will either obscure the fact of our involvement or make our involvement palatable. This diversionary tactic might be accomplished by exploiting unanimous Latin American revulsion toward the Trujillo regime ... If it became known, or strongly suspected, that we were supporting operations to bring about a transition to democratic government in the Dominican Republic, the waters would be suitably muddied, and a climate prepared for the Cuban effort.* 62/

---

* Debatable though Oberst's philosophy regarding the Dominican Republic might be, serious attention to his initial comments regarding paramilitary activities against Castro might have halted -- or at least seriously altered -- the operations which would ultimately conclude at the Bahia de Cochinos. As with other of the cautionary and restrained proposals which would be put forth prior to launching the invasion, little heed

(footnote continued on following page)

In mid-April of 1960 WH/4 made the first presentation for the DCI since the basic program had been approved by President Eisenhower in mid-March. In attendance in addition to the DCI were: Gen. Cabell, Mr. Helms (C/OPS), Herman Horton (CI Staff), and C. Tracy Barnes, Mr. Bissell's Deputy. This high level group was informed that broadcasting activity from Swan Island was scheduled to begin on 17 May 1960 and that very special operations were being carried out in order to provide stories for propaganda use. According to Dave Phillips who made the presentation

RELEASED PER P.L-102-526(JFK ACT)
NARA JA DATE 6/17/95

---

apparently was paid to Mr. Oberst's proposals.

About the same time that Oberst's memorandum was going forward, the DDP was calling for WH/4 to prepare daily progress reports as one way of eliminating the need for crash-type responses or actions. In discussing the contents of such reports, it was indicated that:

> The Progress Report should generally not exceed one page in length, and that we should not hesitate to include it in items which were not favorable to our progress, in other words, setbacks or handicaps which we might have encountered. 63/

Also, by way of keeping informed about developments related to the operation, Chief WH/4 instituted a series of weekly meetings with the operational elements of the DDP "for the purpose of insuring operational coordination similar to that achieved by the meeting of support elements every Tuesday morning." 64/

on propaganda, excellent results were being obtained. The reports on the evolution of the government in exile and the buildup of the stay-behind network and on paramilitary activity indicated that much work still remained to be done to get these activities off the ground. Further, it was pointed out to the DCI and the DDCI that budget estimates were rapidly escalating, principally because:

> Direct costs of nonexpendable equipment [were] being charged against the project which, in fact, was the major cause of the project's over-obligation. It was the opinion of all concerned that such property should be held on a Memorandum Receipt basis without cost to the project, and that charges, if any, should be reflected as direct costs only if property was found unserviceable or was not returned to communications stock supply after the project is terminated. The DCI was advised that this matter would be discussed with the Comptroller for resolution. 65/

Most important in connection with this briefing, was the DCI's comment that:

> With respect to personnel needs, he assured all, no matter whether personnel were overseas or in the US, he would arrange to obtain personnel required in support of JMARC. 66/

The meaning of Chief/WH/4's comments to the DCI, was made quite clear within a few days when Admendment No. 1 to the project was submitted to the Director

RELEASED PER P.L-102-526(JFK ACT)
NARA JR DATE 6/17/95

for approval. The amendment concerned the need for more money and pointed out that:

> Not only has the initial $900,000 already been expended, but it is currently estimated that an additional $1.0 million is immediately required to carry the activity through 30 June 1960 ... Note is also made ... of possible contingencies amounting to an additional $1.4 million for which no funds are requested at this time. 67/

In addition to an early updating for the DCI, WH/4 also undertook to educate the Joint Chiefs of Staff on the Cuban problem very soon after the Eisenhower approval of the anti-Castro program. On 8 April 1960, General Cabell headed a CIA delegation including Mr. Bissell, Col. King, and Jake Esterline which briefed a very high level group of Department of Defense representatives in the JCS conference room at the Pentagon.* General Cabell made only introductory remarks, and the bulk of the briefing was conducted by Mr. Bissell with some assistance from

RELEASED PER P.L. 102-526 (JFK ACT)
NARA JA DATE 6/17/95

---

* Included among the Defense participants were Thomas Gates, Secretary of Defense; Gen. Twining, Chairman, JCS; Gen. Shoup, Commandant U.S. Marines; Admiral Burke; CNO; General Erskine, Chief, Special Ops, U.S. Army; Gen. White, COS/USAF; and Gen. Woolnough, representing COS/Army. 68/

RELEASED PER P.L. 102-526(JFK ACT)
NARA JA DATE 4/7/05

J. C. King. Apparently Jake Esterline, the man who had the monkey on his back as project chief sat quietly by.

The suggestion which had been made by Paul Oberst that the "waters be muddied" by making it appear that the US was backing the anti-Trujillo forces in the Dominican Republic was not introduced during the course of this briefing of the JCS, even though the Dominican Republic was included as a part of the overall briefing. What did emerge with reference to the Dominican Republic was a concensus that if Trujillo were ousted, there was a strong possibility that Castro might move into the Dominican Republic where he probably would be received as a conquering hero.

In the course of the discussion which followed the briefing, Admiral Burke emerged as the principal "hawk," indicating his willingness to move fleet units into the Port au Prince, Haiti area because the suggestion had been made that if Castro went into the Dominican Republic it would only be a few days time before he also would be welcomed into Haiti. In addition, Burke made it quite clear that should the

Cuban government launch an attack on Guantanamo, the Navy was prepared to defend that base. In Burke's opinion, the Navy had adequate force available to do that.* 69/

Whether a direct result of this briefing of the JCS or not, there was a noticeable improvement in WH/4's relations with the military services before the end of April 1960. On 19 April, for example, $150,000 was to be funneled from the CIA's Director of Logistics to the Comptroller, US Army, ostensibly as a working fund for the [29] [10] This money, of course, was to be used for necessary construction, renovation, procurement of material, and hire of native labor as necessary to improve Fort Randolph as a training site for the PM insturctor cadre. 71/

Before the end of April 1960, the Joint Chiefs of Staff had approved, in principle, the Agency's

RELEASED PER P.L. 102-526(JFK ACT)
NARA JA DATE 4/1/05

---

* This briefing for the senior personnel in the Department of Defense, would have taken place in any event; but it may have been prompted by the reluctance of the designated DOD liaison officer with WH/4, Capt. Burns Spore (USN), to do much more than listen to WH/4's requests for the assignment of DOD personnel to the project and for real estate for use in the training program until he received a green light from the SecDef. 70/

RELEASED PER P.L-102-526(JFK ACT)
NARA JA DATE 4/7/05

request for overflight photo coverage of the islands offshore of Cuba. The decision on this matter was taken up, not only with the Air Force, but also with J. Lampton Berry of the Department of State.* Although the authorization and plan for these overflights, presumably by the U-2, antedated the shootdown of Francis Gary Power's U-2 in the Soviet Union, it was recorded that:

> Ambassador Berry had called to say that the Department ... had approved the mission, but insisted that extremely tight security be exercised throughout and that Col. Benson (USAF/Operations) inform Ambassador Berry before each sortie so that the Department would be properly prepared to respond to any emergency. 72/

The first flight, incidentally, was tentatively scheduled for the weekend of 30 April - 1 May of 1960.**

In April of 1960, in addition to working with the Army, the Agency representatives also began to work with the Covert Limited Warfare Committee of

---

* Berry was a Career Minister and former Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary (AE&P) to Ceylon who was at this time assigned to the Bureau of Intelligence and Research.

** Powers was shot down over the USSR on 1 May 1960.

the Office of Special Operations, Department of Defense. One of the particular problems of concern in this relationship was that of covert sea transportation which might be necessary to lift anti-Castro forces back to the island of Cuba. Even though all the planning about which there is a record at this time concerned only cadres for guerrilla warfare training and the infiltration of communications experts, on 25 April 1960, Savilion Chapman of DDP's Maritime Branch met with a Captain Thomas (USN) and a Col. Anderson (USMC) who were members of the DOD/CIA Covert Limited Warfare Stockpiling Committee, and discussed among other interesting subjects:

> The acquisition from the Navy of two Landing Ship-Tanks (LST) and four Air-Sea Rescue Craft (AVR), the training of the Cuban crews for these vessels, and the means of covert transfer of the vessels from the Navy to the Agency.* 73/

In addition to the requested overhead reconnissance of the Cuban coastline by the Air Force, the

RELEASED PER P.L. 102-526(JFK ACT)
NARA JA DATE 4/21/05

---

* It is rather strange that at this early date in April 1960 discussions were being held concerning the acquisition of LST's. There had been no discussions concerning the movement of a large body of Cuban troops back into their homeland; and, consequently, the discussion re LST's seems highly out of place.

Maritime Branch representatives also discussed beach gradient problems with the Marine Corps and representatives of the Navy's Hydrographic Office. It was ascertained that much work needed to be done in order to upgrade information suitable for planning the use of LST's for beaching and landing of troops and vehicles. 74/

In the weeks immediately following Eisenhower's announcement of the anti-Castro policy, the Department of State seemed to be operating in a world of its own -- making elaborate plans for Cuban briefings and the flow of information on Cuba's internal developments. On 25 March, for example, Roy Rubottom, Assistant Secretary of State for American Republic Affairs, was the originator of an elaborate memorandum which provided a check list of current operations and ten categories of activity related to developments in Cuba. From the tenor of the paper itself, it seems as though Rubottom was ignorant of the Cuban issues before the Special Group, of the discussions among CIA, State, and Department of Defense, and of the President's approved plan for covert action. Nor was there any evident awareness of the various overt

RELEASED PER P.L.-102-526(JFK ACT)
NARA JR DATE 6/17/95

availability to the United States of bases and base rights in Latin America that are considered vital to the security of the United States. 37/

An additional aspect of the basic national security policy for Latin America which Gordon Gray was being encouraged to promote with the National Security Council on 10 March 1960 recommended that:

> In the event of an imminent or actual Communist seizure of control from within, take all feasible measure[s] to thwart it, including military action if finally required and appropriate to cope with the situation.* 38/

Following Gordon Gray's briefing of the National Security Council on 10 March 1960, President Eisenhower approved the following rather innocuous actions:

> 1. Every effort should be made to influence the other members of the Organization of American States to recognize the dangers involved in the Cuban situation and support action with respect to them.

---

* Mr. Gray also was advised to play both sides of the street for with reference to the disruptive efforts of non-Communist groups, the position he was being urged to promote was the following:

> The United States should be prepared, if required to protect US interests, to take similar actions against subversion or armed rebellion by non-Communist elements hostile to US interests.

RELEASED PER P.L-102-526(JFK ACT)
NARA JA DATE 6/17/05

TOP SECRET

2. The responsible Departments and Agencies should keep current plans to deal promptly with likely contingencies which might develop with respect to Cuba, especially those involving the safety of US citizens in the Guantanamo Base.

3. The developments with regard to the situation in Cuba should be reviewed by the Council each meeting, for the immediate future. 39/

RELEASED PER P.L. 102-526 (JFK ACT)
NARA JA DATE 4/17/05

Subsequent to the NSC meeting of 10 March 1960, Gordon Gray informed the President that the Special Group had set aside a 2-hour session on 14 March "to discuss the whole range of assets and possibilities in Cuba." 40/ Prior to the 14 March meeting, Messrs. Bissell and King received a somewhat strange memorandum from Allen W. Dulles offering "some suggestions as to possible added 'starters' for our Cuban paper; use your own judgment as to adding them." 41/ Among these starters was Dulles's suggestion that the International Transport Union somehow be induced to refuse to load "dangerous" munitions intended for Cuba and then Dulles made the following rather unusual suggestion:*

---

* In addition to the International Transport Union, Dulles also suggested that an attempt be made to induce Cuban laborers to resist unloading explosives that were sent to Cuba, but as he himself pointed out, Castro probably would use the Cuban Army should the dockworkers refuse to do the unloading.

RELEASED PER P.L. 102-526(JFK ACT)
NARA JR DATE 4/21/95

> Stress point that while the dynamism is running out of the Marxist-Leninist revolution in Russia, it still remains in China. This explains ChiCom special interest in supporting the Cuban revolution and expanding it, with the ultimate aim of facilitating mass emigration of Chinese to the Latin American continent to meet their over-population problem. (This may be premature, but there may be something to it.) 42/

As promised by Gordon Gray, the Special Group Meeting of 14 March 1960 focused exclusively on the Cuban problem, and Mr. Dulles presented the members with the paper entitled "General Covert Action Plan for Cuba." Much of the ground was already familiar to the participants, but the memorandum of the meeting reflects a number of items worth review. Even though Dulles's paper placed heavy emphasis on the propaganda needs, even greater emphasis was urged for covert and overt propaganda activities, not only through WRUL, the commercial broadcasting operation, but also through the efforts of USIA's programs for Latin America -- programs which apparently had been sharply curtailed in the recent past. The question of location for the Agency's covert broadcasting activity was again raised and discussed, the question being whether it should be somewhere in the Florida

Keys, in some Caribbean country, or elsewhere.

Somewhat more attention was focused on the paramilitary plans during this discussion than had occurred before, and Mr. Gray was particularly concerned by the Agency estimate that: "it appears no large scale paramilitary effort (other than wholly overt) will be feasible in less than 8 months"; and he wondered if a crash program was feasible to speed up the training program. 43/ The questions of economic sanctions, OAS and individual Latin American country involvement, the choice of the proper Cuban exiles to represent the government in exile, and the question of a budget -- the $900,000 for fiscal 1960 and the $1.6-1.7 million for 1961 were also the subjects of discussion.

One additional subject of disucssion at this Special Group meeting as recorded by Col. J. C. King was:

> What would be the effect on the Cuban scene if Fidel and Raul Castro and Che Guevarra[*sic*] should disappear simultaneously. 44/

In the reported context of the discussion it is not believed that the term "disappear" was a euphemism for assassination, but rather referred to the ouster of

RELEASED PER P.L. 102-526 (JFK ACT)
NARA JR DATE 6/11/05

Castro's government from political power. The paragraph which had raised the question then continued:

> Admiral Burke said that the only organized group within Cuba today were[*sic*] the Communists, and there was therefore the danger that they might move into control. Mr. Dulles felt that this might not be disadvantageous because it would facilitate a multilateral action by OAS. Colonel King said that there were few leaders capable of taking over so far identified. One possibility was Nunez Jiminez, the head of the Agricultural Reform Program. No other names were widely enough known to be mentioned.*

Other discussion, notwithstanding, the focus of Mr. Dulles's recommendations on 14 March 1960 was that the Central Intelligence Agency should be authorized to take a number of steps which were specifically related to the development of the guerrilla capacity of the anti-Castro groups, both within and without Cuba. The Agency should be responsible for broadening its contacts with such groups and attempting to unify

RELEASED PER P.L-102-526(JFK ACT)
NARA JA DATE 4/17/95

---

* This comment and one made five days earlier (9 March 1960) by J. C. King that "unless Fidel and Raul Castro and Che Guevara could be eliminated in one package -- which is highly unlikely -- this operation can be a long drawn-out affair and the present government will only be overthrown by the use of force" were discussed (pp. 93, 114-116) in SSC report on *Alleged Assassination Plots Involving Foreign Leaders*, and it is apparent from the recollections of the participants in the meetings that assassination was not the issue in these two instances.

them to direct their efforts against Castro. The DCI proposed that CIA should take the lead in assisting these groups to develop friendships among various of the Latin American Governments which were skeptical of Castro and that the Agency should be responsible for identifying and training -- in facilities in the United States or elsewhere -- those who would be the leaders of the Cuban guerrilla warfare groups. At the conclusion of the 14 March meeting, it was agreed that the Agency would revise the paper on the basis of the discussions and plan to present it to President Eisenhower later in the week. 45/

As part of the effort to improve the paper on the proposed anti-Castro operations, the Agency prepared additional backup material which could be cranked into the version which would eventually go to the President. On 14 and 15 March, the records reveal copies of two drafts of such a paper, one of which was labeled as "revised version, done by [C. Tracy] Barnes, evening 14 Mar," which went into more detail on both the political opposition to Castro and on the propaganda activities that were being mounted against Castro. These papers also noted that paramilitary

RELEASED PER P.L. 102-526(JFK Act)
NARA JA DATE 6/17/05

~~TOP SECRET~~

activity would "take the longest to become a usable asset." 46/ The most important difference between these papers and the covert action plan presented by Dulles was that the Financial Annex showed a sharp, upward increase in the anticipated costs for FY '61 -- from $1.6-1.7 million to $3.5 million -- with the heaviest increment coming in terms of the proposed paramilitary operation. The sum for PM operations was revised from an estimated $500,000 in Dulles's 14 March presentation to a total of $1.3 million for that same year.

RELEASED PER P.L.-102-526(JFK ACT)
NARA JR DATE 6/17/95

From the time Allen Dulles enunciated the covert action plan (14 March) until President Eisenhower approved it (17 March), there was an interesting bit of bi-play between the National Security Council and the Special Group 5412. One of the principal concerns of the National Security Council was the proper US response should the Cubans try to intervene or interfere with operations of the Naval base at Guantanamo Bay, including a possible takeover of the Base. On 16 March 1960, after Gordon Gray had been fully apprised of the proposed plan for covert action submitted by Allen Dulles, Gray was the recipient of a briefing

~~TOP SECRET~~

note from a member of his own Staff, Samuel E. Belk, for the planned National Security Council meeting of 17 March which again focused exclusively on the situation at Guantanamo Bay. It appears as though Mr. Belk, even though he was a member of the NSC Staff was completely in the dark as to the planning that had already been undertaken with regard to Castro's ouster. At a time when the President had already indicated that proposals for economic action or direct sabotage of the Cuban sugar industry were less than what he desired, Mr. Belk, for whatever reason, suggested again that with the new sugar legislation, perhaps Castro could be straightened out. In addition, Belk suggested a plan which was "unconventional and radical" -- having President Eisenhower send a message directly to Castro telling him that he was concerned over the deterioration of relations between the two countries and suggesting that Castro have private conversations with an emissary whom the President would personally designate.

Staffer Belk believed that this was a "can't lose" situation for the US. If Castro refused to meet with Eisenhower's representative, then he would

RELEASED PER P.L-102-526(JFK ACT)
NARA JA DATE 6/17/95

be condemned throughout Latin America. The US on the other hand would receive the blessings of the OAS and the UN for its efforts. If Castro did agree to meet with the President's representative, then relations between the US and Cuba probably would be improved. 47/ Mr. Belk's suggestions apparently never went beyond Mr. Gray.

RELEASED PER P.L-102-526(JFK ACT)
NARA JA DATE 4/17/95

At 1430 hours on 17 March 1960, Mr. Dulles presented his covert action plan to a combined meeting of the National Security Council and the principals of the Special Group. In attendance with the President were Vice President Nixon, Secretary Herter, Mr. Merchant, Mr. Rubottom, Secretary of Treasury Anderson, Secretary Irwin, Admiral Burke, Richard Bissell, Colonel King, Gordon Gray, Major John Eisenhower, and General A. J. Goodpaster. Based on General Goodpaster's report on the meeting:

> The President said that he knows of no better plan for dealing with this situation. The great problem is leakage and breach of security. Everyone must be prepared to swear that he has not heard of it. He said we should limit American contacts with the groups involved to two or three people, getting Cubans to do most of what must be done ... He understood that the effort will be to undermine Castro's position and prestige ...

The President told Mr. Dulles he thought he [Dulles] should go ahead with the plan and the operations. He and the other agencies involved should take account of all likely Cuban reactions and prepare the actions that we would take in response to these ... The President said he would like some groundwork laid with the OAS to let the Latin American countries know that if the Cubans were to start to attack our people in Cuba we would be obliged to take action ...

The President said that at the next meeting, he would want to know what is the sequence of events by which we see the situation developing -- specifically what actions are we to take. He said our hand should not show in anything that is done. In the meantime State should be working on what we can do in and out of the OAS ... Essentially, the job is to get the OAS to support us. 48/

RELEASED PER P.L. 102-526 (JFK ACT)
NARA JA DATE 4/17/95

During the course of this meeting, Secretary of the Treasury Anderson exhibited great concern over the welfare of the US firms which had investments in Cuba; and he was pushing for US intervention to protect these private property rights. The President, however, cut him rather short on this. Vice President Nixon, too, indicated some concern with the American business interests in Cuba; and suggested that steps might be taken to cut off the flow of new capital investment by US firms in Cuba, terminating private

TOP SECRET

businesses already there, and reducing American tourism.* 49/

President Eisenhower's approval of the 17 March 1960 covert action program against the Castro regime thus set US policy. Briefly restated, the four major courses of action called for the formation of an anti-Communist exile political opposition located outside of Cuba which would be the focal point for all of the anti-Castro elements, provision for a powerful propaganda offensive against the island, perfection of a covert intelligence-in-action network organization within Cuba, and the development of a paramilitary force outside Cuba, with the necessary logistical support for covert military operations on the island.**

RELEASED PER P.L. 102-526 (JFK ACT)
NARA JA DATE 4/17/95

---

* Col. King prepared a memorandum on the same meeting, but, strangely enough, failed to include a list of the participants. The fact that the President, Vice President, and Secretary of State were in attendance could not be known from King's memo alone. 50/ Not in attendance at this meeting was Jake Esterline, Chief, WH/4. This was one of numerous instances where higher level personnel -- in this instance, the DCI, Col. King, and Bissell -- were the principals in a meeting at which Esterline would seem to have been an equally legitimate participant.

** Even as President Eisenhower was approving the anti-Castro effort a Special National Intelligence Estimate was in process and would state that Castro was not "demonstrably under the domination or control of the international Communist movement." (SNIE 85-60, 22 March 1960, p. 3. S.)

~~TOP SECRET~~

It is particularly important in light of changes which were subsequently made in the covert action plan to note the language of the approved policy with reference to the paramilitary operation:

> Initially, a cadre of leaders will be recruited after careful screening and trained as paramilitary instructors. In a second phase, a number of paramilitary cadres will be trained at secure locations outside of the US so as to be available for immediate deployment into Cuba to organize, train, and lead resistance forces recruited there, both before and after the establishment of one or more active centers of resistance.

At no point in this Presidentially-approved plan for covert action by the Agency is there any hint of invasion. The paramilitary activity was clearly to be in the context of guerrilla warfare with leadership and training to the dissident activities inside Cuba being provided by Cubans trained by United States technicians.* Finally, with reference to the approved

RELEASED PER P.L-102-526(JFK ACT)
NARA JR DATE 4/11/05

---

* Colonel Jack Hawkins (USMC) who was Chief, WH/4/PM correctly noted in his memorandum for record of PM operations for Project JMATE that:

> The only *approved, written policy* governing paramilitary action against Cuba is contained in paragraph 2d of the Policy Paper approved by the President on 17 March 1960." (Emphasis added by author.) 51/

RELEASED PER P.L. 102-526(JFK ACT)
NARA JR DATE 4/17/95

plan, the overall budget for the remainder of FY '60, and FY '61 of $4.4 million was approved with the caveat that should there be cost overruns, these could be drawn up from the Agency's reserve for contingencies.*

---

* A copy of the approved Program of Covert Action Against the Castro Regime is given as Appendix B. (Appendix B, page 300). The reader is also urged to examine Appendix C, a set of correspondence between the Chief of Naval Operations, Admiral Arleigh Burke, and Livingston Merchant, the Undersecretary of State for Political Affairs. (Appendix C page 311.) Admiral Burke apparently had become extremely agitated about the rise of Castro to power in Cuba; and on 26 February of 1960, he had forwarded a paper on US action in Cuba, to both Secretary Merchant and also to the Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs, Irwin, in which the Navy's senior officer took it upon himself to examine the various options available to the United States to reassert itself in the Western Hemisphere vis-a-vis the growth of Communist power represented by Castro. Admiral Burke outlined a series of options that were available to the United States, such as multilateral action through the OAS, unilateral overt action by the US, or covert unilateral action by the US.

Leaning heavily on both the Monroe Doctrine and Article 5 of the Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance (the Rio de Janeiro Treaty of 1947) Burke made a series of recommendations covering the same ground -- propaganda, organization of the anti-Castro exiles who were in the US, or direct US military intervention -- which had already been considered at high levels and were already familiar to both Secretaries Merchant and Irwin. On 10 March 1960, Merchant replied to Burke's memorandum noting "a marked degree of similarity in the suggestions of the Navy and of our people here concerning the need to reverse the trend in Cuba and the methods which are best calculated to achieve

(footnote continued on following page)

RELEASED PER P.L. 102-526(JFK ACT)
NARA JR DATE 4/1/05

With reference to his action of 17 March 1960, President Eisenhower subsequently wrote:

---

this result." Merchant then went on to review the bidding that had already been done, particularly in the Special Group, on the question of how to handle Castro, emphasizing, of course, that State was very much concerned that precipitate action against Castro's government would work, if not immediately, certainly in the long run, to the detriment of the United States, particularly in its relations to the other governments of Latin America.

Whether the response did not satisfy Admiral Burke or whether he sincerely believed that the Navy, more than any other US Agency, should be principally responsible for setting US policy toward Cuba is not known. In any event, on 16 March 1960, he forwarded another set of proposals for US action in Cuba to both Gordon Gray, the Special Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs, and to Allen W. Dulles. Burke's comments on the transmittal sheets to these two individuals are interesting. To National Security Adviser Gray he wrote:

> Dear Gordon: Enclosed is my copy of a memorandum on U.S. Action in Cuba which may be of interest to you. Sincerely yours, Arleigh Burke.

To the Director of Central Intelligence he wrote:

> Dear Allen: Enclosed is a memorandum my Staff prepared containing some suggestions which might be useful to you in your work. Naturally, I do not agree with quite all the comments contained in the memorandum but I know that you will forgive the impatient young lad for his desire to make sure no opportunity is left uncovered. Warm regards. Sincerely, Arleigh Burke.

Why one of the recipients was cautioned about "the impatient young lad" and the other was not is something

(footnote continued on following page)

> On March 17, 1960, less than two weeks after my return from Puerto Rico, I ordered the Central Intelligence Agency to begin to organize the training of Cuban exiles, mainly in Guatemala, against the possible future day when they might return to their homeland. More specific planning was not possible because the Cubans living in exile had made no move to select from among their numbers, a

---

of a mystery. Certainly the proposals by one J. E. Pond, Jr., reflect at least, Pond's youth and immaturity. For among other things in his memorandum, Mr. Pond suggested that the Navy: "Accept Mr. Merchant's offer in his letter of March 10 to Admiral Burke of a complete briefing of State Department activities vis-a-vis the Cuban situation in an effort to prod State to move faster." Or, with reference to action that the State Department should take, he suggested: "Brief all individuals and groups of U.S. nationals going to Latin America on the Kommunist [*sic*] threat in Cuba for further dissemination to host country personnel." Two items which had not appeared in other of the papers related to the evolution of US policy to oust Castro which were introduced by Mr. Pond, were that the IADB (Inter-American Defense Board) become involved in the anti-Castro effort -- an exceedingly naive suggestion considering that the members of this group were far from unanimous in condemning the Castro Revolution. And the second unique contribution of this paper which Admiral Burke saw fit to forward to two very senior members of the Executive Branch, was the spelling throughout the paper of Communist with a "K". These last proposals that Admiral Burke had forwarded to the Director of Central Intelligence ended up in the files of Chief, Western Hemisphere Division. The memorandum having been sent down from Mr. Bissell's office, with the following notation to Col. King:

> Admiral Burke sent this over to the Director on the afternoon of 17 March, and the latter handed [it] to me. I do not believe it requires a reply, but pass it to you for any value it may have.

RELEASED PER P.L.-102-526(JFK ACT)
NARA JA DATE 4/17/95

leader whom we could recognize as the head of a government in exile.* 52/

---

* In preparing this comment, the former President apparently had to call on his own memory, on the memory of Gen. Goodpaster, and the memory of Gordon Gray. Based on his own recollections Eisenhower said that neither his own nor Goodpaster's records contained anything about the 17 March 1960 meeting. Similarly, Gordon Gray wrote to Eisenhower:

> You may recall that not so very long after I became your Special Assistant, in a meeting you had with Allen Dulles and me you gave instructions that activities of the so-called "Special Group" should not be recorded in any place except the files of the Director of the Central Intelligence Agency. You did not wish that there be other copies. It was for this reason that I did not seek a copy of the March 17th paper for my files, nor did I make notes at that meeting.
>
> Subsequent to March 17th, I began to make memoranda of every meeting on that particular subject because I had a hunch that someday these might be important, and I intended to put them in your hands at the appropriate time, understanding, of course, that you might wish to have them destroyed. Incidentally, there were no carbons or other copies made of these memoranda. By not making copies, and by planning to put the documents in your own hands for whatever disposition you wished to make of them, I sort of rationalized my violation of your instructions about not making such memoranda. I hope I need not assure you that it was not my practice to violate your instructions and this is the only instance of such that I can recall. 53/

RELEASED PER P.L. 102-526 (JFK ACT)
NARA JR DATE 4/11/05

here, too, the seeds were planted by Tracy Barnes for an attitudinal survey of "Cuban society" which could have (and should have) caused CIA planners to re-think the whole anti-Castro effort.* 19/

A very similar briefing, with somewhat more emphasis on possible paramilitary action, was given to a high level group from DOD on 12 February 1960; and the agenda for the 17 February 1960 meeting of the Special Group, again emphasized that the Castro Government was dependent on sugar revenues for both continuation of popular domestic and hemispheric subversion programs.** 20/ It was further suggested to the Special Group that dissidents within Cuba might also be stimulated to sabotage, with the ultimate result leading to Castro's ouster. 21/ The recommendation that the DCI made to the Special Group was as follows:

---

* This refers to the Lloyd Free Report, which is discussed subsequently in this Volume, see pp. 222-226.

** The DOD representatives who were briefed were the Deputy Secretary, Mr. Douglas; Mr. John Irwin, Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs; General Erskine; and General Lansdale.

RELEASED PER P.L. 102-526 (JFK ACT)
NARA JA
DATE 4/17/95

> That CIA be authorized to initiate operational planning, including covert spotting and assessment of potential agents, for eventual sabotage of both Cuban and American-owned sugar mills. Should this course of action prove feasible and desirable, the operation would be designed to deny Castro as much as possible of the revenues anticipated from the 1960 sugar crop. 22/

Interestingly enough, although the briefing for DOD had placed considerable emphasis on paramilitary planning, apparently no mention of the subject was made to the Special Group.

On 17 February 1960 when Allen Dulles presented the sugar sabotage plan to the Special Group, he emphasized that he was not asking for permission to engage in action, only that he was looking for a Special Group approval. Mr. Irwin (Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs) noted that he and the Deputy Secretary of Defense, Mr. Douglas were all for the plan; and the Group agreed to present the plan to the Secretary of State and to Gordon Gray so that the latter could get the President's reaction.

President Eisenhower was less than enthusiastic about the sugar sabotage plan, reportedly doubting that the loss of sugar revenues would impact on

RELEASED PER P.L. 102-526 (JFK ACT)
NARA JR
DATE 4/17/95

Castro's ability to continue to finance subversive activities in other Latin America areas. President Eisenhower also objected to the focus on economic sabotage, and he would not agree to the plan to identify assets specifically for sabotage operations against the sugar industry. Eisenhower was willing to support a program to identify assets for the sugar industry " and other things as well ... including even possibly things that might be drastic." In addition to identifying assets on a broad basis, the President also requested that a comprehensive covert action program be prepared by Mr. Dulles. This, it was suggested, should go to the Special Group; and if they approved the plans, then the President wanted to discuss them. In any event, action on the PM program would be delayed until Eisenhower returned from his upcoming Latin American visit and gave his specific approval.* 23/

---

* The Minutes of the Special Group Meeting of 17 February 1960 also noted that

> Mr. Joseph Scott of State also reported later that Mr. Herter had made exactly the same point.

This appears to have been one of the few instances where Department of State representatives indicated support for possible direct action programs rather than political solutions to the Cuban problem.

RELEASED PER P.L. 102-526(JFK ACT)
NARA JR
DATE 4/7/95

Despite the rather positive doubts that the President had about the sugar sabotage activity, J. C. King charged ahead almost immediately following the Special Group Meeting of 17 February 1960. On 18 February, King and Milo Perkins had a detailed discussion concerning the disruptive effects which might result from interference with the Cuban sugar operation. Perkins was planning meetings with Ambassador Hill and Thomas ("Tommy the Cork") Corcoran, and King brought to Perkins's attention that Corcoran had been willing and able to provide valuable assistance to the Agency in the past. Later in the month, Col. King met with Thomas Mann, the Assistant Secretary for Economic Affairs (subsequently Assistant Secretary for American Republic Affairs) who reportedly was in favor of both reduced sugar quotas and direct sabotage of Cuban sugar mills. According to King, Secretary Mann also would support both cut backs in US oil companies deliveries to Cuba and actions which might cut back on US tourist trade with the island. 24/

Col. King also consulted with former Ambassador William Pawley, whom he asked to make arrangements for the publication of *Diario de la Marina* in Miami,

RELEASED PER P.L. 102-526(JFK ACT)
NARA JR DATE 4/17/95

and also "to raise at least a portion of the money, which would be needed for this operation." In addition to Pawley, King also contacted Henry Holland in New York City, suggesting that Holland raise money, through Cuban exile Justo Carrillo, to help pay for the propaganda efforts of New York radio station WRUL. King agreed that Holland could tell prospective donors that the "money was going to be used on behalf of non-Batista groups who were going to make a serious effort to remove Fidel Castro." 25/

In addition to J. C. King's high level contacts, Jake Esterline and Mr. Dulles had a meeting with Abbott Washburn, Deputy Director of the US Information Agency who had requested a briefing on the current state of activities in Cuba -- Washburn was concerned lest there be a conflict of interests between USIA and the CIA's ongoing effort in the area. Washburn presented the Agency with a copy of some proposals which the State Department had approved for implementation by USIA in Cuba. USIA's pitch would be that the long-standing friendship between Cuba and the United States was being endangered by the infiltration of Communists and Communist ideology

RELEASED PER P.L-102-526(JFK ACT)
NARA JA DATE 6/17/05

into Cuba -- at the same time not denying that the US was sympathetic to the need for a change in Cuba. The Director and Mr. Esterline agreed that it would be advisable for Mr. Washburn, who was planning to visit Cuba, to meet [3], COS Havana, and outline the USIA program for [3] benefit.* 26/

As the propaganda activities were being pushed forward, as plans were being made for training Cuban exiles, and as the possibilities of sabotage, PM action, and other measures against Castro were being contemplated, a cautionary memorandum apparently was drafted by one of the individuals most closely concerned with the potential anti-Castro operations. The memorandum, undated and unsigned, reviewed the anti-Arbenz operation in Guatemala in light of what was being planned for Project JMATE. It noted some of the similarities or differences with respect to the removal of Jacobo Arbenz in contrast to the possibilities of removing Fidel Castro; and in light of the ultimate tragedy at the Bay of Pigs, some of the

---

* One result of the meeting with Washburn was a decision to turn over a planned USIA anti-Castro cartoon effort to CIA.

RELEASED PER P.L. 102-526(JFK ACT)
NARA JR DATE 6/11/05

key points made in this memorandum are worth repeating -- even though it is not known who read the piece. Among other things, for example, the author of the memorandum stressed "the unique coincidence of favorable factors" with reference to Guatemala and suggested that it was unlikely that any of these would operate with reference to Project JMATE.

It was noted that the Guatemalan leadership was "unusually inept"; that "Communist support for Arbenz came from the local Communist Party, which was immature, badly led, and generally weak"; and, that "we had unbelievable luck." 27/ The memorandum also noted that there were a number of circumstances which would not recur during the course of the anti-Castro activity. Specifically pointing out that where Arbenz was a weak leader, Castro was obviously a strong leader; that Castillo Armas was a Guatemalan leader of high character and standing, but no one of similar stature had surfaced in Cuba to oppose Castro; and that in Guatemala Arbenz had made no changes in the armed forces of Guatemala, and when the crisis came, he could not depend on his army. Castro, on the other hand had eliminated the Batista influence, and filled

the key military positions with his own followers and "introduced a system of intense ideological indoctrination." Furthermore, the unknown author pointed out that while Moscow's interest in Guatemala was compartatively mild -- the Soviet Ambassador to Mexico City was the nearest Soviet official available to the Arbenz Government -- in Cuba, the heavy economic and propaganda support from both Moscow and Peiping were a matter of record. 28/

The memorandum closed by pointing to three areas where the writer claimed that tactical -- not strategic -- errors were being made. It stated that the blunt propaganda attacks on Castro were forging all anti-US elements in Cuba into a united front and US efforts should be attempting to drive a wedge between Castro, as a victim of international Communism, and the Communists both Cuban and foreign. Secondly, it was pointed out that the propaganda broadcast out of US commercial radio stations, even if the time were legitimately being purchased by Cuban exile groups, would be a "kiss of death" for anyone who tried to deny US intervention in Cuban affairs. In part related to the propaganda activities, the planned use

RELEASED PER P.L.102-526(JFK ACT)
NARA JA DATE 4/17/95

RELEASED PER P.L-102-526(JFK ACT)
NARA JA DATE 6/17/95

of US business groups as a cover for the Agency's support of the Cuban opposition, particularly the use of US business as a funding mechanism, was also hazardous in the eyes of the author of the memorandum under study. If the author was correct in assuming that this cover would not withstand careful scrutiny, it would mean that the anti-American contingents would have additional ammunition to use against the US. The memorandum suggested that many of these risks could be eliminated if propaganda activities were moved to Third countries and if fund raising activities were run out of Latin America or Western Europe. 29/

Based on the language, the familiarity with the Guatemala activity and the nature of the critique, it is probable that Tracy Barnes wrote the memorandum in question. The memorandum may have been prompted in part by the increasing attention which the OCB and the Cabinet had been giving to fire bomb attacks on the Cuban cane fields by light aircraft flying out of the United States. The Agency fully supported General Quesada's effort to put an end to such flights.* 30/

---

* Quesada was Director of the Federal Aviation Agency.

RELEASED PER P.L.-102-526(JFK ACT)
NARA JR DATE 4/17/95

From 2 March 1960, when the Director briefed Vice President Nixon on Agency activities in Cuba and the state of Cuban affairs, until 17 March 1960, when President Eisenhower formally approved the covert anti-Castro plan, CIA personnel most closely involved in the anti-Castro effort were fully immersed in the efforts to define -- and refine -- a US policy which would be acceptable to President Eisenhower. In the course of this two week period, they were engaged in efforts to satisfy the 5412 Group, the National Security Council, and themselves that they had developed a viable program which would lead to the downfall and ouster of Fidel Castro and his principal cohorts, Che Guevara and Raul Castro, and the elmimination of Communism from the island of Cuba and, in effect, from the Western Hemisphere.

During this period of evolution of national policy, WH/4 held its first official meeting as a branch on 9 March 1960. J. C. King and Jake Esterline were in charge of the meeting and outlined the general nature of the programs that were going to be put into operation (propaganda activity, PM training, commo training) and they emphasized the need for cooperation

and support from all of the offices that were represented at the meeting, including, among others, the Office of Training, the Office of Communications, the Comptroller's Office, the DDS, DPD, the PP Staff, Personnel (particularly the Military Personnel Division), and the Office of Security. At this initial meeting, Jake Esterline mentioned that Bob Reynolds, Deputy Chief, WH/4, Dave Phillips, Propaganda Officer, Phil Toomey, Political and Psychological Stategist, [3], the Economist, and Ed Stanulus, his Plans and Ops Officer, would be the principals who would be in contact with other Agency elements which would be called on for support. In addition, Esterline also noted that liaison channels would be established with other elements of the US Government, particularly with the Office of Special Operations of the Department of Defense. 31/

It was during the period between 8-17 March 1960 that the previously mentioned covert anti-Castro program which Allen Dulles had agreed (on 17 February 1960) to provide to the Special Group evolved. Among those in the Agency having a direct hand in preparing a suitable paper for the Director's presentation, were

RELEASED PER P.L. 102-526(JFK ACT)
NARA JA
DATE 4/17/95

C. Tracy Barnes, Richard Bissell, Dick Helms, Jake Esterline, J. C. King, and Tom Parrott, among others. Those who figured most prominently among the Special Group representatives at this time were Livingston Merchant, Department of State; John Irwin, Assistant Secretary for International Security Affairs, Department of Defense; Admiral Burke, Chief, Naval Operations; and Gordon Gray, the President's National Security Adviser. Other than the more than a dozen memorandums and drafts and other papers related to the development of the policy paper, perhaps a note from Richard Helms to C. Tracy Barnes on 8 March 1960 best illustrates the seriousness with which the Agency approached the task of writing a paper for the Director. Mr. Helms's note to Mr. Barnes read as follows:

> Tom Parrott gave me for security late this afternoon the attached paper for the 5412 Group outlining the proposed covert action program against Fidel Castro. After reading it, I asked Tom to defer consideration of Cuba until next week since I feel that this document needs redrafting whether it is used by the Director for an oral briefing or handed to the designated representatives for their enlightenment.
>
> I think you will agree with me that the paper is poorly drafted and needs considerable pointing up in various

RELEASED PER
NARA JR DATE

places. I do not disagree with the listed recommendations in paragraph 6, but I do feel that the backup material in paragraphs 2 and 3 needs recasting. For example, the reference to a "short-wave radio station patterned after Radio Free Europe", is no way, in my opinion, to describe what we have in mind. Also the paragraph on covert economic action is not sufficiently precise and raises more questions than it answers. There are other points, but there is no sense in belaboring them in this note to you.

May I ask that you take this matter in hand and advise WH how to put it in suitable shape for use by the Director with the 5412 Group next week. 32/

In the paper to which Mr. Helms referred the problem facing the US was stated rather simply as follows:

To replace the present Government of Cuba, headed by Fidel Castro, with one that will be acceptable to the United States; and to cause this change to occur in such a manner that anti-US repercussions are not induced in Latin America. 33/

Throughout the discussion of the Agency's role in the anti-Castro activity, there was a tremendous concern that there be no "anti-US repercussions," not only in Latin America per se, but particularly among the Latin American representatives in the Organization of American States and in the United Nations. The constant quest for plausible deniability would

RELEASED PER P.L. 102-526 (JFK ACT)
NARA JR DATE 4/11/95

~~TOP SECRET~~

become the holiest of grails -- constantly, and unsuccessfully, to be sought throughout the course of the operation by Agency planners.

The proposed paper for the Special Group (the paper which Mr. Helms found somewhat lacking) emphasized those areas highlighted in previous Special Group sessions -- anti-Castro propaganda, disruptions of the Cuban economy, including large scale sabotage operations, and the development of instructor cadres to provide both communications and PM training cadres to resistance groups already extant in Cuba. Interesting, too, is the fact that at this early stage of US planning mention was made of the offer from the Guatemalan Government of a training site for the PM cadres, or "action groups" as they were called. A financial annex included in the proposals for the Special Group indicated the need for $900,000 for the remainder of FY 1960 and $1.6 million for FY 1961.* 34/

RELEASED PER P.L. 102-526 (JFK ACT)
NARA JA DATE 4/7/05

---

* Apparently Mr. Helms failed to read the financial annex carefully enough, for the estimated requirement for fiscal 1961 which is shown as $1.6 million, was either a typographical error, or a mistake in addition -- the sum of the parts shown for FY '61 is $1.7 million. It also was noted that for the remainder of FY '60, the Agency reserve funds would have to be drawn on to meet these "non-program requirements."

As the paper was being prepared for Special Group consideration, J. C. King, Chief, Western Hemisphere Division had forwarded a memorandum for the Director of Central Intelligence, providing him with additional information for use during the Special Group discussions; and the transmittal to the DCI recorded that this paper had been used to brief Mr. Nixon on 2 March 1960. King's memorandum covered much the same ground as the paper which went to the Special Group, but contained considerably more detail about the activities of the Castro Government which were directly aimed at overthrowing the legitimate governments and replacing them with Communist oriented governments. Col. King's paper also revealed that both Guatemala and Nicaragua -- the only two governments in Latin America which were to throw their full support behind the Agency's anti-Castro activity -- had made offers at this time for both radio time for anti-Castro broadcasts and, also, for training facilities for anti-Castro groups which the Agency might wish to sponsor. 35/

Despite President Eisenhower's previous objections to the over-emphasis on plans to sabotage Cuba's

RELEASED PER P.L. 102-526(JFK ACT)
NARA JA DATE 6/17/05

sugar industry, King's paper did reflect considerable emphasis on disruption of that economic sector. Another item which Col. King saw fit to include in his memorandum was the following:

> We have available, a drug, which, if placed in Castro's food, would make him behave in such an irrational manner that a public appearance could have very damaging results to him.* 36/

Even as the Special Group was planning its sessions on the anti-Castro program, so, too, was the National Security Council being geared up for discussions of the same situation. Again, there was great concern over the question of possible loss of prestige should the US act independently of the international organizations. There also was interest in protecting US business and in the protection of US lives, and the question of viability of the Guantanamo Base was of considerable concern to the President's National Security adviser, Gordon Gray. The policy that Gray was advised to recommend to the National Security Council regarding US bases stated:

> Take action as necessary, including military action, to insure the continued

RELEASED PER P.L-102-526(JFK ACT)
NARA JR DATE 6/11/95

---

* For comments on this subject see Part VII of this volume.

RELEASED PER P.L-102-526(JFK ACT)
NARA JA DATE 6/17/05

in Project PBSUCCESS, the operation which had resulted in the overthrow of the Communist-dominated government of Jacobo Arbenz in Guatemala in 1954. Esterline was the choice of J. C. King, Chief, WH Division; and to the best of Esterline's recollection, toward the end of his two year tour in [11] he had been queried by King about remaining in [11] or coming back to Headquarters to work on the Cuban problem. It was shortly after his return to the States in January of 1960 that Esterline became Chief, WH/4. 3/

In addition to his participation in the Guatemalan episode and his extensive guerrilla warfare experience in World War II with the OSS, Esterline thinks that he got the job because J. C. King "had pretty much confidence in my judgment."* 4/ The relationship between Esterline and J. C. King, Chief, WH Division and the relationship between King and Richard Bissell, Deputy Director for Plans (DDP) during the course of

---

* The author had heard that Esterline had been directly selected by the DDP, Richard Bissell, to be the head of WH/4. Bissell made no mention of this, and it is contrary to the story noted above, as told by Esterline.

RELEASED PER P.L-102-526(JFK ACT)
NARA JA DATE 6/17/95

the Bay of Pigs Operation has been the subject of considerable speculation ever since the close out of the invasion. It seems appropriate that some attention should be devoted to this subject before going further into detail about the evolution of the covert plans to oust Castro. One source close to the DDP at the time of the anti-Castro activity stated flatly:

> A task force was formed under Bissell, excluding J. C. King, Chief, WH/D, from having in fact any control whatsoever over the activity. 5/

The WH/D history states:

> There was an informal but understood short cut in the chain of command; basic decisions were made at the DDP, DCI, or Presidential level. Although some of the key personnel were detailed from WH Division, the Cuban Headquarter's unit was in another building; and no one pretended that J. C. King was running the show. Jacob D. Esterline ... was the Chief of the Cuban Unit, during the build-up and invasion attempt and took his orders from the DDP. 6/

Walter Elder, formerly Special Assistant to Allen Dulles at the time of the Bay of Pigs Operation has indicated that there was a deliberate attempt to keep King on the outer edges of the anti-Castro activity; but according to Elder, Col. King always knew what was going on and was thoroughly involved in the Bay of

RELEASED PER P.L-102-526(JFK ACT)
NARA JA DATE 6/17/97

Pigs activity from its inception until its conclusion.* 7/

Esterline himself declined to comment for the record on this particular speculation, but indicated that he was not sure what J. C. King was up to at all times. It is clear, however, that Esterline was in very close contact with Col. King throughout the course of the Bay of Pigs Operation.**

Additional insights concerning J. C. King's role in Bay of Pigs Operation have been provided by Richard D. Drain, who was Chief of Operations for WH/4, and by Richard Bissell, the DDP. Drain has stated:

> J. C. King never was told, I think for understandable reasons, to what extent he

---

* Elder suggested to the author that "they" wanted King out of the operation because of his strong Republican affiliations. "They" were never identified, but King was well acquainted with highly placed figures and contributors to the Republican Party.

** This will become most apparent in the subsequent discussion of the relationships between WH/4 and William D. Pawley. During the author's initial conversation with Esterline about the Bay of Pigs, Esterline did state, in a manner similar to Elder, that J. C. King was out of the mainstream of the anti-Castro effort, because he had known Republican Party affiliations. 8/ There was no elaboration indicating the impact of such affiliations on King's role, and there is nothing in the record to support this allegation.

RELEASED PER P.L-102-526(JFK ACT)
NARA JA DATE 6/17/05

was in it, to what extent he was not in it. Therefore, from time to time, he would protrude ... sometimes, saying that he was sorry to protrude; and then he would retract; and then he would be in; and then he would be out ... that's as a person. Then again, his Deputy, Ray Herbert, would call and say "I just don't understand Cable 18963 IN from Guatemala today. Would you come over and explain to me what that's all about;" and I would step out of the maelstrom of JMATE ... they were just working flat out ... and go over. There would be the old WH types doing their thing in the old WH way. Maybe two cables a week from the stations, and quite leisurely ... I think what had happened to J. C. King was that he had stayed overlong in the same job; and he was "Mr. WH," by Gawd. With the exception of first Guatemala and then Cuba, there was very little that ever happened in Latin America which got to be, given our other worldwide responsibilities in the DDP, a very front priority matter; and consequently, at Staff meetings, for example, they would go around and talk about the Soviet Union and China and Europe and even Africa. Then, if there was any time left, J. C. King would have his time at bat and report some relatively minor thing. Except in the case of Guatemala there was, as everybody knows now, a very substantial paramilitary operation which was run by Richard M. Bissell in his capacity as Special Assistant to the Director for Planning and Coordination.

I think that one of the many reasons ... and I never was able to get much in the way of history on Guatemala as an aid to the study of the Cuban operation ... while the latter was in process ... was

TOP SECRET

> that this had never set very well with J. C. King. He was divested of the Guatemalan experience, and particularly when it turned out to be a success ... PBSUCCESS was a success, through dumb luck more than anything else. J. C. ... couldn't take any of the bows for it. All right, that rankled, I am sure. Now this one comes along, and rather than expand WH/4, or whatever the hell it was, and leave this JMATE Project within that Branch, and build up that Branch -- oh, no. Once again the same man, Dick Bissell -- now, however, DDP instead of SAPC -- becomes the case officer for the thing; and his assistant, Tracy Barnes, is all over him. One of J. C. King's few very good men, Jacob D. Esterline, is pulled aside and made Chief of the project ... The old man had a great deal of *amour propre*, J. C. King did. He was very vain. He had all of the area expertise that one would like to see in a Division Chief, but he had been at it an awful long time. It was a very incestuous Division. In terms of the rotation, it was solely within WH. There were very few people in WH who had served outside of the Western Hemisphere, except in Washington. They were a tight-knit little group, and here now, for the second time running, one of their big chances to shine -- there was a lot of money and all that kind of stuff -- again had been taken away ... and it was ... it was tough. 9/

Where Drain implied that J. C. King was cut completely out of WH/4 activities and operations, Mr. Bissell had indicated that the situation was somewhat different. In the course of an oral interview, the

TOP SECRET

RELEASED PER P.L-102-526(JFK ACT)
NARA JA DATE 6/17/95

former DDP responded to questions concerning J. C. King in the following manner:

> Question: I would like to clarify at this point J. C. King's relationship to the Bay of Pigs project. I have heard it on both sides -- that he was involved and that he was deliberately end-run.
>
> Mr. Bissell: There is no doubt in my mind that that was the case. I was going to say that both of the things that you have heard have an element of truth in them. There was a deliberate decision fairly early in the game -- I doubt if it was as early as March [1960. In fact,] I am pretty sure that it wasn't, [but] I am reasonably sure that the decision I speak of was made by some such date as June [1960] -- [that] Esterline would take charge of this Project and Esterline would have direct access to me. He would not be under the usual requirement of all the cases going through J. C. King. Now, as the scope of the scale of this operation increased, and with the passage of time, Esterline's direct channel to me came to be more exercised; and there was frequent interchange between Esterline and myself that didn't go through J. C. King in the sense of a command channel. On the other hand, J. C. was brought into all the consultations and was fully informed from the very beginning about this operation. His advice was sought and given, and I usually found it very good and followed it. I remember no specific case where either J. C. King's specific advice or general attitude toward the operation was inconsistent with, or in conflict with my own.

RELEASED PER P.L-102-526(JFK ACT)
NARA JA
DATE 6/17/05

Question: Why did you make this decision with regard to Jake, coming directly to you and not going through King? Was it just a matter of great efficiency, or what precipitated that?

Mr. Bissell: I think it was in part on the model of the Guatemalan operation, and in part, I think, a feeling, probably on my own part -- in some degree perhaps on the part of Allen Dulles -- that J. C. was not effective enough to handle this kind of very fast moving, quite large scale, quite complex, paramilitary operation.

Question: Do you recall any instances where there was a serious conflict between what Jake wanted to do and what J. C. King thought should be done?

Mr. Bissell: I don't remember many, if any, and I believe that the relationships between Jake and J. C. were pretty good throughout. 10/

Certainly the written record bears out Bissell's contention that King was fully informed and that the relationship between King and Esterline was, if not love, at least mutually respectful.*

---

* The only point of contention between King and Esterline that surfaced in the records concerned the degree to which William Pawley should be involved in affairs related to the organization of the Cuban exiles. At one point, Jake suggested to the DDP that all contact with Pawley be cut off, but in sending Esterline's memorandum through channels, J. C. King noted that he was against cutting Pawley completely off from contact with WH/4. In fact, Pawley was in continuous contact -- even though in disagreement -- with both Jake and King until the close out of the operation.

RELEASED PER P.L. 102-526 (JFK ACT)
NARA JA
DATE 6/17/05

Another of the questions which must be addressed in setting the stage of the Bay of Pigs operation is the failure of Richard Helms -- at that time Chief of Operations (COPS) for the DDP -- to become more than marginally involved in the Cuban project. Oral interviews again provided the best explanations, and, consequently, are entered into this record in rather full detail. Dick Drain, who became COPS/WH/4, made the following comments:

> Helms was COPS [Chief of Operations]. Either on his own volition, which I suspect or on order -- which I doubt -- Dick Helms completely divorced himself from this thing. I mean absolutely! The one time that I heard from Helms during this entire project was ... I am sitting down there in my chair, as COPS of the project, on a Monday, having spent the entire goddamned weekend working with [24] trying to get an airplane and some Cubans out of Montego Bay before the Brits in Jamaica came back from their long weekend ... I am sitting there congratulating myself that the plane is out, and the Cubans are out, and the British are back, and it hasn't hit the fan, and I get a telephone call from Dick Helms's long time secretary, "Mr. Helms would like to speak to you." Well, fine ... well, the whole thing on his part was so ... to me ... incredibly apologetic ... three times he said to me in different parts of the conversation ... "As you know, I have nothing to do with this project." What he did have to do with, ever since

ER P.L. 102-526(JFK ACT)
DATE 4/17/05

> the Francis Gary Powers thing, he had been a member of an inter-Agency committee that met with periodic regularity to discuss air matters of any sensitivity. I guess he'd had enough to do with this project so that somebody [who] had [been] reading the cable traffic told him ... "Well, those nuts down in Quarters Eye seem to have lost an airplane this weekend." He was going to the regular committee meeting that afternoon, so he had to ask me the details ... very apologetically. The third time that he said, "You know I have nothing to do with this project," I said, "Well Mr. Helms, I don't want to be fatuous about this, but I wish to Christ that you did have because we could use your expertise." He said, "Hahaha ... yes, well thank you very much," and that was the end of that. He avoided the thing like the plague. One of the reasons may have been that, of course, life went on; and if Bissell was getting increasingly immersed in this one thing, somebody had to watch the whole worldwide store ... which of course Helms was damned good at. A less attractive suggestion is that Helms figured that there was a high likelihood that this thing would screw up, and he didn't want to have the tar baby around him. I don't know. 11/

Bissell, in responding to the question about Helms' role during the course of the Bay of Pigs, commented as follows:

> I think that he [Helms] saw most all of the cable traffic and I think he was pretty well informed as to what was going on, very well informed; but he was really out of the line of command on this operation. There was something of a tacit agreement between us, that he would be devoting himself to a lot of the other on

JA
ED PER P.L-102-526(JFK ACT)
DATE 6/17/05

going business of the DDP office, because this was taking a great deal of my time.

Question: This was a tacit agreement, this wasn't a session in which you and Helms ...

Bissell: Let me say this was probably not that explicit. I would make an observation here, and I don't want you to infer anything really beyond what it says, it was not particularly easy -- I did not find it particularly easy -- to discuss things clearly and derive a clear understanding with Dick [Helms] about the division of labor between us when he was my Deputy. I don't imply by this any sense of conflict or rivalry, but he would go ahead and handle certain kinds of matters, and I would go ahead and handle certain kinds of matters. We saw one another, of course, all the time. Quite often I would consult him about something that I was handling. I think rather less often he would consult me. I don't mean to imply however in that any kind of concealment from me -- I never had that feeling at all -- but it really was our habit during the whole time that we were in those positions that the division of labor between us was more tacit than explicit. 12/

Simultaneously with the decision to create a separate Branch in WH Division to handle the anti-Castro activity discussions were begun by both the Special Group 5412 and on an inter-agency basis as to the nature of the anti-Castro effort. Among the many questions raised early in the game was whether

RELEASED PER P.L. 102-526(JFK ACT)
NARA JA
DATE 6/17/05

the US program should be overt or covert, with the overt implications being the ultimate application of US military force to oust Castro. DCI Dulles emphasized that contingency planning should be undertaken by the Special Group, without necessarily involving either the President or the National Security Council.

The Department of State was concerned that if Fidel Castro were deposed, perhaps his successors, Che Guevara and Raul Castro, would be even worse than Fidel. As reported in subsequent congressional revelations concerning CIA's role in assassination plots, it was during the Special Group Meeting of 13 January 1960 that the Director of Central Intelligence "emphasized that we do not have in mind a quick elimination of Castro, but rather actions designed to enable responsible opposition leaders to get a foothold." 13/

At this same Special Group Meeting, President Eisenhower's National Security Adviser, Gordon Gray, predicted with uncanny accuracy the situation which would ultimately develop as one of the key weaknesses in the whole concept of the Bay of Pigs Operation. According to the report on the Special Group Meeting:

> Mr. Gray commented that a problem would be posed for administration officials if a decision should be taken to change our attitude toward Castro, as outlined earlier in the meeting. He acknowledged that any such decision must be kept highly secret, but he foresaw difficulties which would arise, for example, during testimony by the Secretaries of Defense and Treasury before Congress, at public gatherings, etc., if they should have to give an impression that the US was not doing anything about Cuba. 14/

This in fact, was the "damned if I do, damned if I don't" position in which Richard Nixon found himself in the Fall of 1960 and the position in which the United States found itself with reference to both the United Nations and the Organization of the American States throughout the course of the Bay of Pigs operation as the myth of "plausible deniability" overruled common sense. Following the initial Special Group meeting, there was a flurry of activity seeking some solid proposals; and in a CIA meeting of 21 January 1960, C. Tracy Barnes (the Assistant DDP for Action), J. C. King, Jake Esterline, and Dick Helms among others, discussed a whole series of issues which would be basic to the program from this time forward: identification of the principal Cuban leaders -- Ramon Barquin, Justo Carrillo, and Miro Cardona (who would eventually

RELEASED PER P.L. 102-526(JFK ACT)
NARA JA
DATE 4/17/95

head up the principal anti-Castro organization supported by the Agency) were mentioned; radio propaganda operating out of either Third country or US areas was raised; the training program for both communicators and for PM trainers at Fort Randolph in the Canal Zone was discussed; and the possible acquisition of aircraft for support operations and the question of US business as a cover for the operations of the exile groups in the United States were all discussed. The possible involvement of US businesses to put overt pressure on the US government for the possible imposition of economic sanctions and as a covert means of raising money for the support of Cuban exile organizations also surfaced. This initial meeting also recognized the problem of trying to gain the support of the more liberal Latin American Governments (e.g., that of Betancourt in Venezuela). 15/

Al Cox, one of the senior officers in paramilitary operations was in attendance, and he would subsequently note:

> Stringent security precautions were placed on JMARC, including the exclusion of the PP Staff and other Agency components from all cable and dispatch traffic and from access to correspondence between

RELEASED PER P.L. 102-526(JFK
NARA JA
DATE 4/17/9

> the project and the office of the DDP ... In point of fact, such restrictive measures were somewhat meaningless insofar as keeping awareness of the project's activities away from PP/PMG. The A/DDP/P granted permission to PP/C/PMG to read the daily project traffic, (with Esterline's knowledge and permission). Esterline personally knew the majority of the PP/PMG senior officers, and in no time he had drafted six or seven of these, including the Deputy Chief, PMG, for assignment to JMARC ... This, of course, was valuable as a built-in penetration of JMARC in the best FI and CI tradition.* 16/

Early in February of 1960, Allen Dulles was briefed in general terms on the planning that was being initiated by WH Division, and at the same time J. C. King told the Director "that the Branch concept was used [in establishing WH/4] rather than the term Task Force for greater security and to simplify channels of command." The Director subsequently explained to the Special Group (3 February 1960) some of the activities that were being undertaken, noting that within the next week or two, the Group would receive

---

* The crypt for the WH/4 anti-Castro operation was initially JMARC. Following compromise of this crypt, the project became JMATE (sometime in the period between 6-13 December 1960). Throughout this volume the project will be identified as JMATE, except in direct quotations.

PER P.L-102-526(JFK ACT)
JA
DATE 6/17/95

a paper outlining the Agency's thoughts on the programs which had been initiated against the Castro Government.* 17/

The proposals of which the DCI had spoken were discussed in a DDP review session on 11 February 1960 which was attended by Tracy Barnes, Jake Esterline, Al Cox, Dave Phillips, and Jim Flannery. The focus was on sabotage of the Cuban sugar industry,** propaganda broadcasts, and funding. Noting that WH Division had roughly $50,000 available for immediate use, it was speculated that the "ultimate magnitude" of the anti-Castro effort might reach 3 million dollars -- an estimate that would, in effect, be some 40 million short of the eventual cost. It was stated, however, that funds would easily be obtainable from the Agency reserve to meet any shortages. At this planning session, the training program for the PM cadre at Fort Randolph in Panama was given minor attention; and

---

* In addition to the Special Group, which included a DOD representative, WH/4 worked directly with other representatives of DOD regarding current developments and the possible coordination of activities vis-a-vis Cuba. 18/

** "The big sugar sack?"